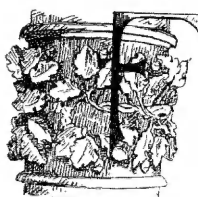




## A HISTORY OF OLD COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE.



THAT most practical purposes the colonial architecture of the United States may be described as a reproduction, with such means and skill as the builders could command, of the English architecture of the eighteenth century. It outlasted the condition of political dependence by quite half a century. Indeed, such building in the United States as was architectural at all remained in effect colonial during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and until it was displaced by the Greek revival. "The colonies," as they were up to the time when they ceased to be colonies, comprised only the Atlantic slope of the Appalachian chain, a strip of sea-coast varying from forty to two hundred miles in width, and extending from the boundary of Canada, then merely a geographical expression, to the boundary of the Spanish settlements, or rather of the Spanish claims, in Florida, which was hardly even a

geographical expression. Only where the mountains declined, as in the neighborhood of New York, were the settlements extended westward. Between Portsmouth on the north and Charleston on the south, and east of the mountains, was included all that there was of what is properly colonial building.

In spite of the diversity of the sources from which the coast was settled, the building became uniformly English as soon as it became so durable or ambitious as to take on the character of architecture. There are relics of Swedish building in Pennsylvania, and relics of Dutch building in New York and New Jersey. But neither what we can see of the relics of New Sweden and New Netherland, nor what we can learn of the state of things of which they are relics, suffices to invalidate the statement that so soon as the building of the colonies began to be architectural it began to be English. When the final transfer of New York to the British was made, in 1664, it is probable that three hundred buildings were as

many as were surrendered, and there is no evidence that the most pretentious of these fairly represented the state of architecture in Holland, where the Flemish Renaissance, to which a resort has been had within the past twenty years by architects, especially by British architects, in search of a style, was then in its most flourishing condition. The old market of Haarlem, the design of which has lately been adapted with much ingenuity and cleverness to the uses of a New York church of Dutch origin, and which is perhaps the most characteristic product of the Dutch Renaissance dates from about 1580. The small farmers and small traders who formed the Dutch community had built only to fulfill their immediate necessities, and timber as most available for the quick provision of shelter was the main material. The relics of Dutch architecture now extant in New York and New Jersey owe their preservation, of course, to the more durable character of the structure, which is mainly of rough masonry, with a sparing use of brick, as the more precious material. The Holland bricks seem to have been preferred to the English, so long as bricks continued to be imported, that is to say, nearly or quite to the end of the colonial period, though bricks were made along the North River very much earlier. They were made, however, of Dutch shapes and sizes, and it is questionable whether in many cases it was not the shape and size of "Holland bricks," that gave rise to the tradition that bricks had been imported from Holland which were in fact of American manufacture.

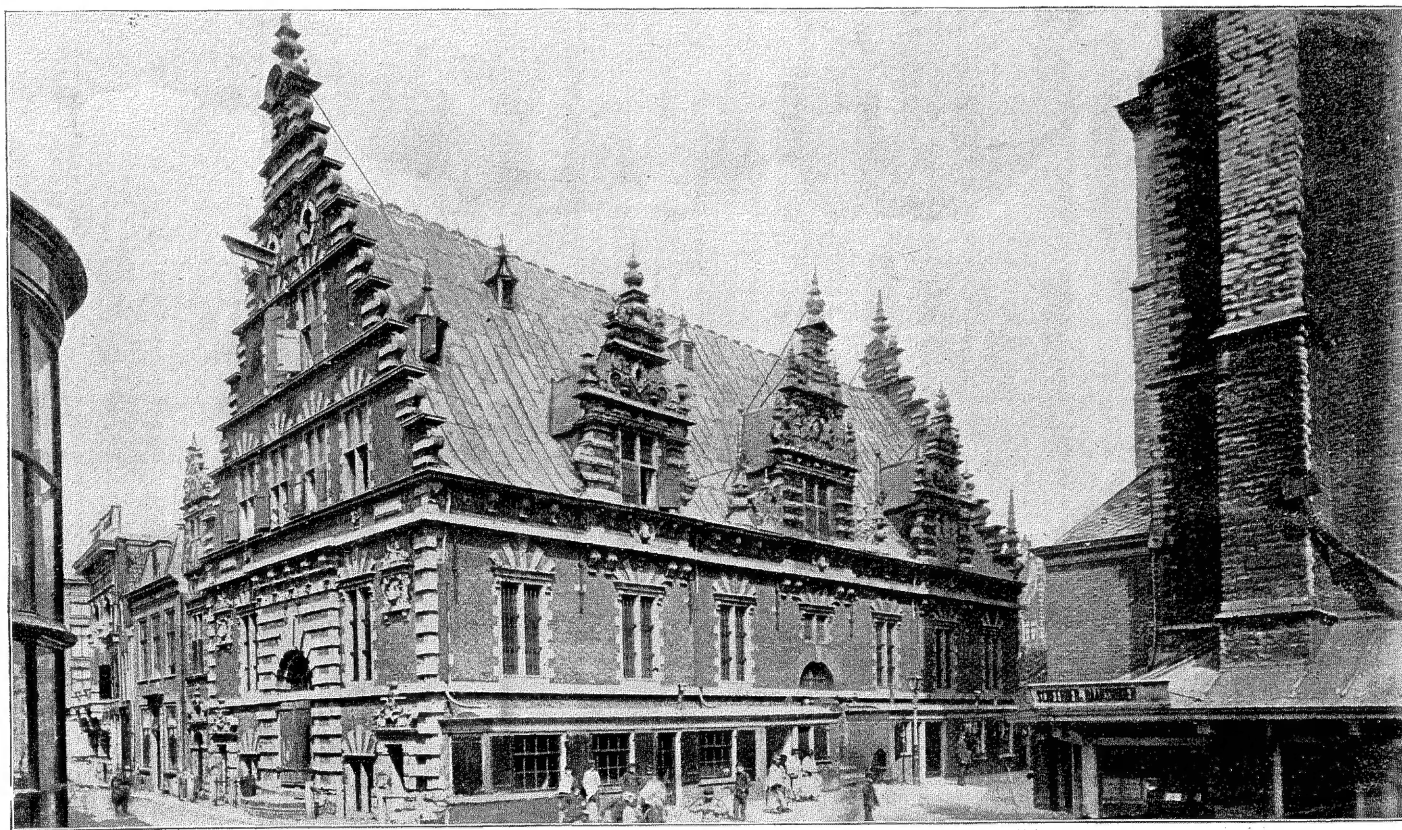
Albany, it is true, continued to be a Dutch settlement for some time after it had been renamed from Fort Orange, and after New York had ceased to be so. But as soon as permanent buildings, such as churches, began to be erected, even in Fort Orange the English taste had come to prevail there also. A meeting-house was indeed one of the first requisites in the Middle Colonies as well as in New England, but there is little evidence that before the beginning of the eighteenth century it had any pretensions superior to

the dwellings, except what it derived from its greater size. The meeting-house of the pioneers, often a place of refuge from Indian attacks, had the twofold character of the ancient building of the British border, which was

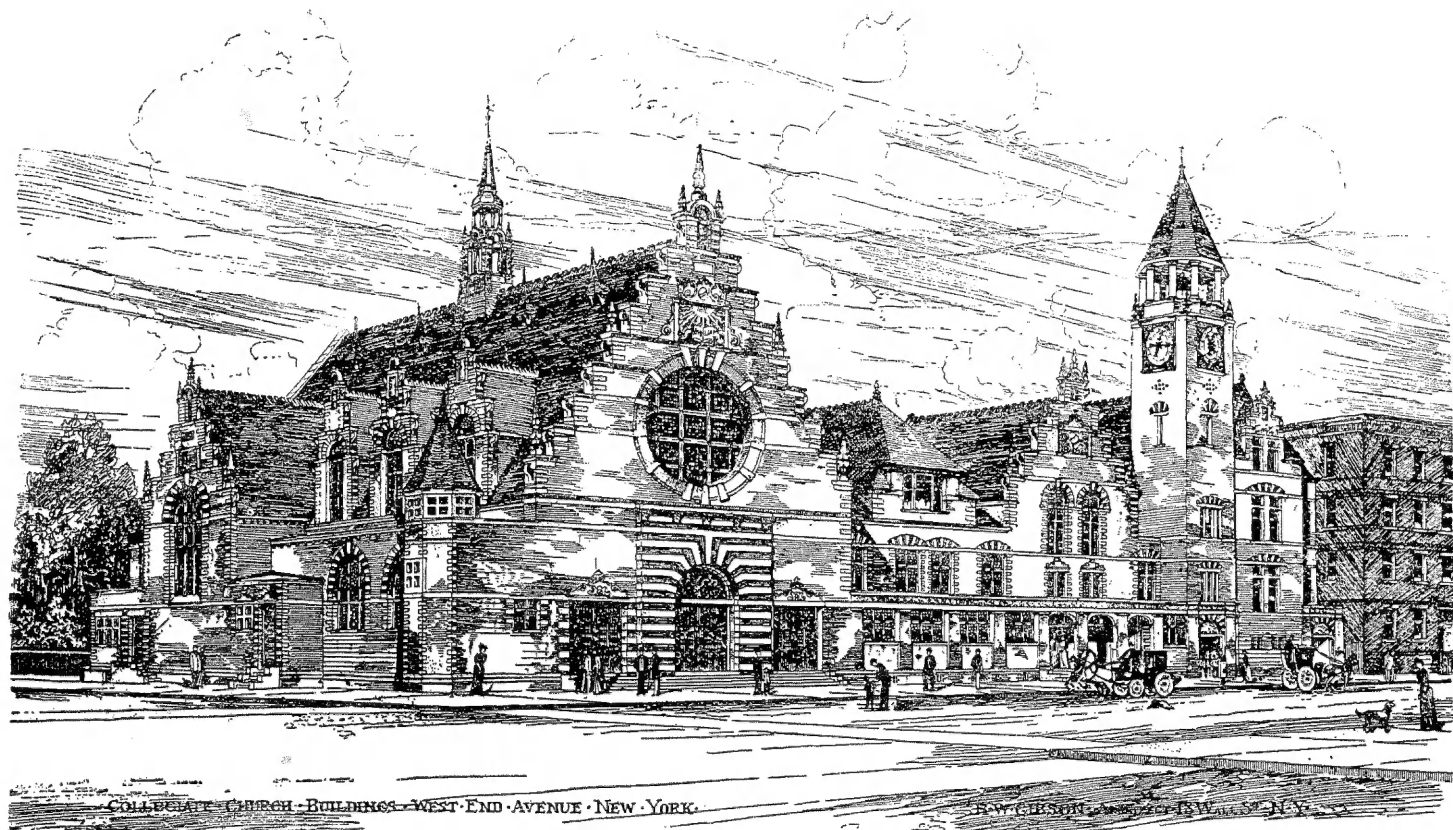
Half church of God, half tower against the Scot.

This was the case with the meeting-house of logs that was built by the Swedish colonists as the Delaware, in 1677, and that was succeeded by the "Old Swedes Church," built in 1700, and still standing. The plan of this edifice is evidently conformed to its requirements, without much thought of appearance. In execution it is a very workmanlike example of brick-work, but the detail proves, as clearly as the uncouth general form, that nothing but utility was in the mind of its builders. The little belfry that bestrides the roof is obviously an addition of a much later date than the body of the building, and this may be said with almost equal confidence of the decorated doorways of cut stone, which are insertions of a date that must be very considerable later than the beginning of the eighteenth century.

There is one church still remaining which is indisputedly much older than the Old Swedes', and to which tradition assigns a date so very much older as to stagger credulity. This is St. Luke's, in Newport parish, the old brick church, near Smithfield, Virginia, still standing and lately restored to habitableness, though its congregation has long since migrated and left its site more solitary than it was two centuries ago. The date assigned to it is 1632, and has little else than tradition to support it, the most palpable form of the tradition being that a Virginian, who was born in 1777 and died in 1841, was employed in 1795 in the office of the clerk of Isle of Wight county, and remembered seeing in the parochial records of 1632 frequent references to the building of this church, then in progress. The records, themselves, were long ago made illegible by decay and have disappeared. Whoever compares this date and this church with



OLD MEAT MARKET, HAARLEM.





what is otherwise known of the condition of the plantations in 1632 will find it extremely difficult to accept the date. The two natural questions, "where did the money come from," and "where did the workmen come from," are hard to answer. It is true that Raleigh had, in 1588, begun the work of evangelizing the New World by giving £100 "for propagating Christianity in Virginia," and in 1619 and the following years, under the instigation of King James and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was himself one of the "Adventurers" of the Virginia company, the subscriptions for a "university" in the colony amounted to £1,500. A minister had attended the first ship load of colonists in 1606, and the Church of England was as much concerned about the religious welfare of the colony as the Independents and Presbyterians afterwards became about the spiritual state of New England. That there was a church building upon or near the site of the existing edifice in 1632, or even earlier, is probable. What is extremely difficult to believe without more convincing evidence than that which has satisfied the two historians of the Episcopal Church at Virginia, is that a church so monumental as to have lasted in its essential parts for two centuries and a half should have been within the pecuniary and mechanical means of the colonists in 1632, only a quarter of a century after the first settlement at Jamestown, twenty years after the baptism of Pocahontas, eight years after the patent of the Virginia Company had been revoked and the colony made a royal province, twelve years after the massacre which had destroyed Jamestown and for the time checked all missionary enterprise. It was not until 1633 that George Herbert's couplet was published, paraphrased in smoother verse a century later by Bishop Berkeley :

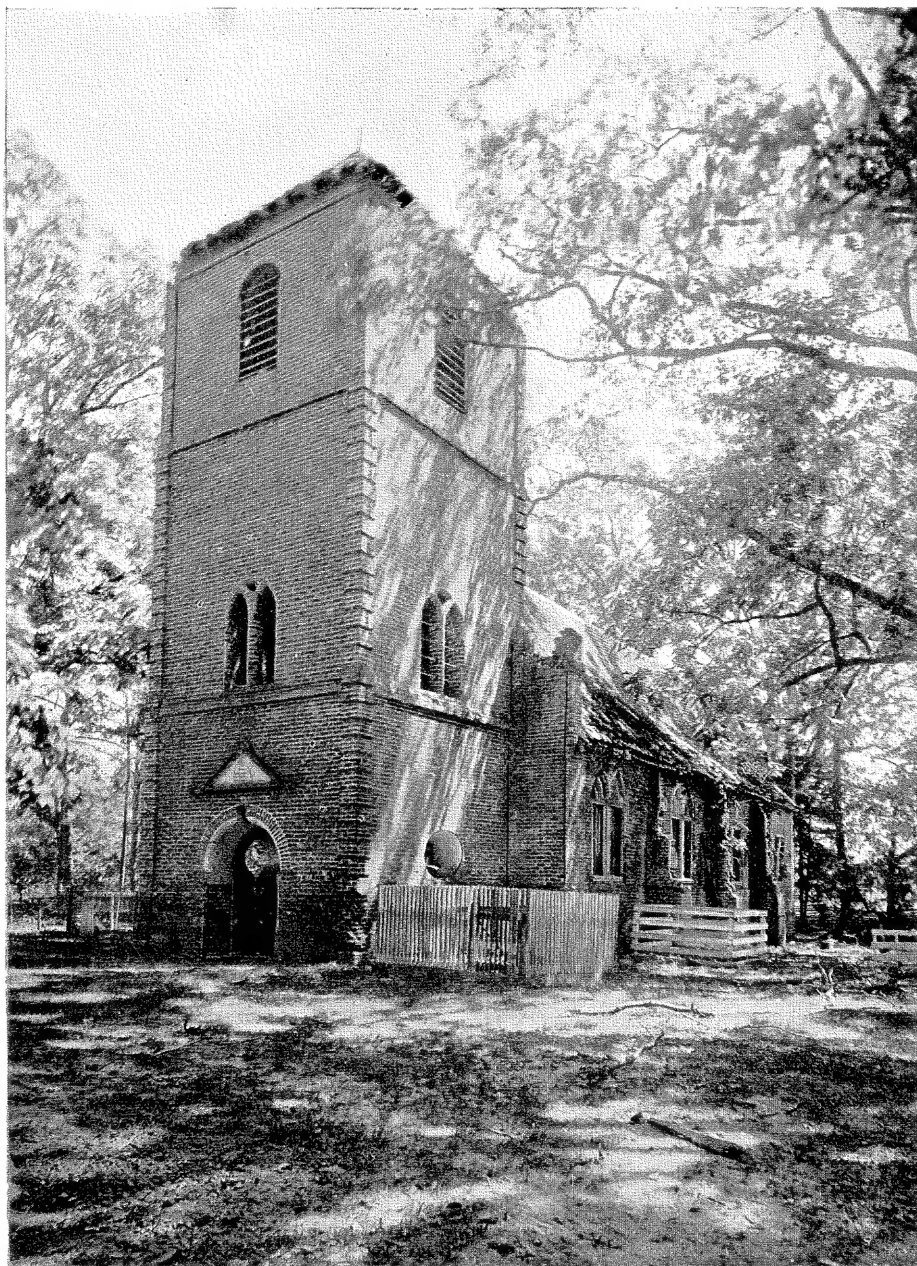
Religion stands on tiptoe in our land  
Ready to pass to the American strand.

It was not until 1701 that was founded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which,

indeed, never extended its labors to Virginia, but had a marked influence in the church building of the Middle Colonies. Even in 1655 there were but ten ministers in all Virginia. It seems, therefore, that a date nearly half a century later than that assigned by tradition is necessary to prevent this interesting building from being an entirely anomalous exception to all that we know of the state of society in Virginia or in America in 1632. A duration of two centuries still leaves it a venerable object, as American antiquity goes, and justifies the claim that local pride makes on its behalf of "the oldest Protestant church in the Western Hemisphere," and it may easily be the oldest building within the limits of the English colonies in America. The more credible supposition as to its age detracts no more from the architectural than from the historical interest of the building. Architecturally, indeed, the building might easily enough be referable to the date which tradition assigns to it. The body of the church is a parallelogram of fifty feet by thirty, and the adjoining tower eighteen feet square by about fifty feet high. A drawing made about forty years ago represents the tower as covered by a plain low pyramidal roof, but this was very likely more recent than the building. Whether the church was built in 1632 or much later it is probable that workmen as well as materials were imported expressly for its building, for there was scarcely permanent employment for such a body of bricklayers in Virginia at any time during the seventeenth century. Nearly a hundred years later (1781) Jefferson deploras "the unhappy prejudice" of the Virginians "that houses of brick or stone are less wholesome than those of wood," adding that as the duration of wooden buildings "is highly estimated at fifty years, every half century our country becomes a *tabula rasa*." This earliest of Virginian monuments is an excellent piece of brick-work that owes its duration to good workmanship and to the quality as well as the quantity of material in its thick walls. It is quite clear that it was not designed by



CATHEDRAL AT SALTILLO, MEXICO.



ST. LUKE'S, NEWPORT PARISH, NEAR SMITHFIELD, VA.

A. D. 1632.



Philadelphia.

OLD SWEDES CHURCH.

A. D. 1700.

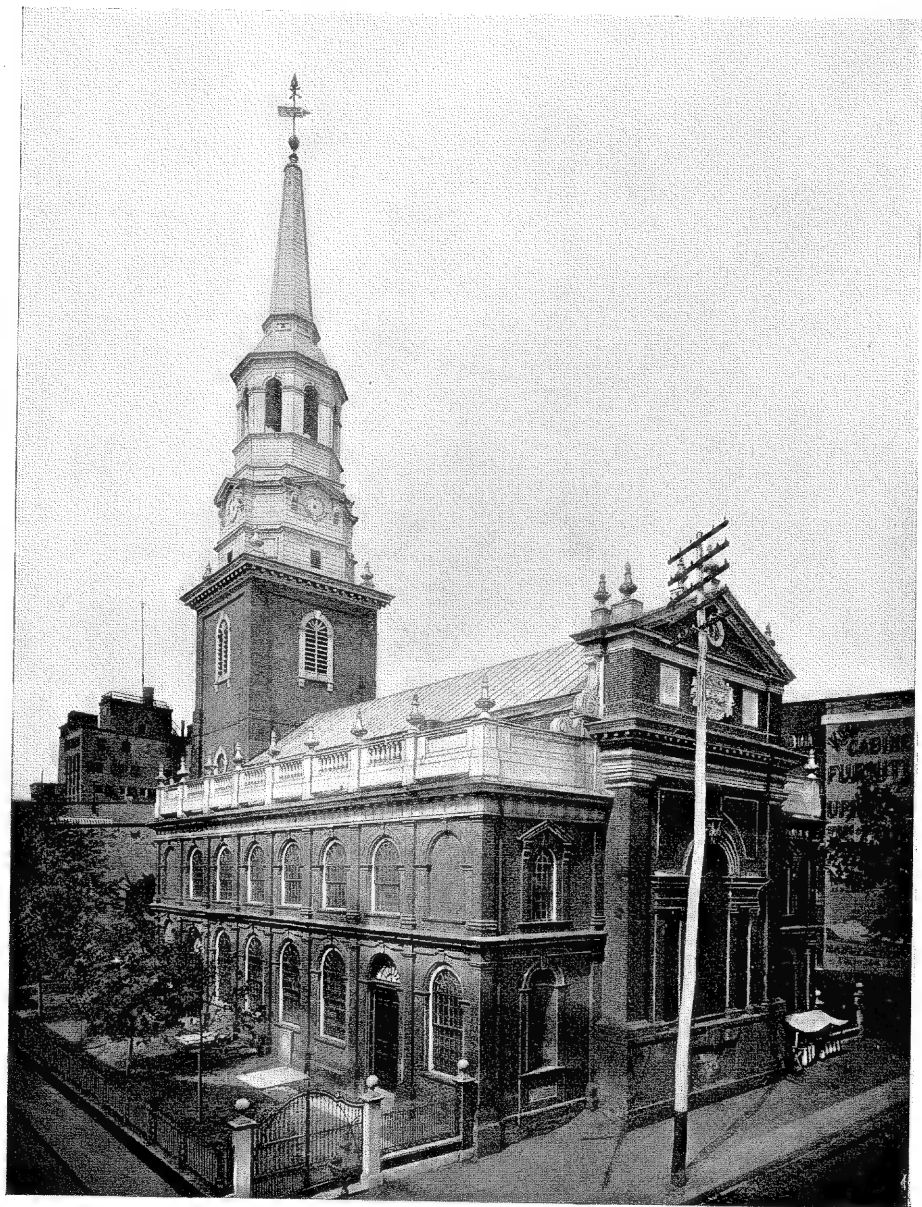
an architect, for it has no badge of the Jacobean or Caroline architecture except the appearance of the protruding keystone over the entrance, and the quoining at the angles of the tower, though, indeed, this latter is as old in English building as the so-called Anglo-Saxon period. The work is what might be expected from an English bricklayer of the seventeenth century reproducing from memory, and in the material available to him the form of a parish church of the old country. The Gothic tradition had died out and the reproduction was a reproduction of the forms alone. The arch, for example, in the second stage of the tower is not structurally an arch, for the joints are horizontal, and it owes its stability merely to the cohesion of the brick and mortar, though the arch of the belfry stage is a true arch, a ring of half a brick in thickness. The buttresses, it is probable from their form, were useless appendages, such as the nineteenth-century architect frequently applies to denote that his building is Gothic. It is possible, however, that they may have had reference to the original roof construction, and possessed a mechanical function with relation to it, though this cannot be determined, as the church was re-roofed "some twenty or thirty years" before 1857, when Bishop Meade described it.

Whatever its precise date may be, St. Luke's, at Newport, is probably, with two exceptions, and these barely exceptions, the only colonial church of the seventeenth century still standing, and is eminently worthy of the pious pains that have lately been taken to restore it. The oldest churches in the Middle Colonies, antedating by a year the oldest in Philadelphia are the Dutch church at Sleepy Hollow and the Swedish church at Wilmington, Del. The former is a parallelogram of rude masonry, the windows framed in yellow bricks that were undoubtedly imported. It has an apsidal end, as in Philadelphia, but with the gable of wood, bearing a wooden belfry, very artlessly designed and attached to the roof, which is quite rude enough to be the reproduction of that set upon the original building of Philipse. The church at Wilmington, equally rude in construction, is distinctly better in design, and the lateral porch is a positively picturesque feature. The Old Swedes', as we have seen, was built just at the close of that century. Early in the following century Philadelphia took, in population and wealth, the lead among American cities, which it held throughout the colonial and revolutionary periods and did not lose until the end of the first quarter of the present century. In churches and in public buildings the relics of the colonial period are much more extensive and interesting than those of any other American town, and perhaps than those of all other American towns. The plainness of the domestic and the commercial building during this period, so violently in contrast with the now current Philadelphia mode in these departments, is in part referable to Quakerish simplicity and in part to the preference for brick which came from the natural facilities of the place for brickmaking, and the early advantage that was taken of them, in so much that "Philadelphia bricks" acquired, during the eighteenth century, a pre-eminence that they retained until within the last twenty years. It is not without significance that the most elaborate and pretentious of the early buildings of Philadelphia should have been that of the Church of England. The present edifice succeeded a previous church, also in brick, which was older than the existing Swedes' Church, having been built in 1695, and no doubt resembled it in design. It rejoiced, however, like so many colonial churches in the Middle Colonies, in a communion service given to it by Queen Anne. At the time of its erection (1727-1731) Christ Church was not only by far the finest building in the colonies, but in relation to the wealth of the community was a more impressive testimonial of public interest in its purpose than any religious edifice erected since. There was at that time and for long afterwards no such person as a professional architect in the colonies. The me-



chanics were intrusted with the design as well as the execution of utilitarian buildings, while for civic or religious monuments the designs were either imported or intrusted to amateurs, who dabbled in Vitruvius and had some knowledge of the current modes of the old country. A physician of Philadelphia, Dr. John Kearsley, was the amateur who was invoked to design Christ Church. It is not clear whether the steeple, as it now stands, was part of his original composition, for it was not finished until 1754, twenty years after the completion of the church. It is less successful in design than the body of the church to which it is attached. Though the modeling of the octagon is very well considered as a design for a substructure of a spire in masonry, it loses most of its effect when rendered in evident woodwork, and the spire itself, which is carried to the height of 196 feet 9 inches, is not happy in outline or proportion. Upon the body of the church one is inclined to congratulate the shade of the amateur designer, considering the difficulties under which he labored. He had at command excellent brick and excellent bricklayers, but the task of making an architectural building out of bricks alone was one which he not only forebore to attempt, but which doubtless never occurred to him as feasible. To him, as to his professional contemporaries in the old country, architecture was a matter of "the orders," and to make a work of architecture out of a building was to apply the orders to it with accuracy and discretion. Unfortunately the exterior application of the orders involved the employment of large masses of stone and of skilled stonecutters, and skilled stonecutters in sufficient numbers were not to be had in the colonies at that time. Hence it was necessary to imitate the orders in brick, or in wood, the latter process being objectionable from its lack of durability, and the former from its mean and petty appearance, even to those who did not at all connect the forms of the orders with the construction that gave rise to them. The lack of stonecutters in colonial Philadelphia during the colo-

nial period is made evident by the use, in the dwellings of the humble class that remain from that period, of sills and lintels of wood in brick walls, thus limiting the duration of the building to that of the more perishable material. In Christ Church it is made evident by the construction in brick of members which could not have been devised for the material, as the pilasters of the walls and of the chancel-window and the entablature of this window. The exterior is, however, a reasonably frank and straightforward exposition of the interior arrangement—a galleried room, 75 feet long by 61 wide and 47 high, with a chancel 15 feet by 24. The interior was designed with accurate knowledge of what was done in England, and shows the system, adopted by Wren and his successors, of an order completed by the insertion between the column and the impost of the arch of an ugly and irrelevant fragment of entablature. That the detail here is more correct than that of the exterior is doubtless due to the fact that the amateur architect was here assisted in his design by the mechanics who were to execute it. Indeed, it is noticeable throughout the whole colonial period, at least the politically colonial period, that the carpenters were much better trained than the stonecutters, and that the woodwork habitually betrays the result of this superior training, being at once more correct in design and very much more accurate in detail than the stonework in the comparatively few instances in which classic detail was attempted in stone. Neither at the time of its erection nor long afterwards, did Christ Church, Philadelphia, have any rivals to the northward. There is not a church left standing in New York within thirty years as old, nor were there any of which there is any reason, on architectural grounds, to lament the disappearance. The Old South Church in Boston, was contemporaneous with Christ Church, having been begun in 1729, but the interest of this is exclusively historical. Indeed, considering that the plan of the two edifices is virtually the same, and their dimensions not very far apart, the Philadelphian



Philadelphia

CHRIST CHURCH

A. D. 1727-31.



Philadelphia.

INTERIOR CHRIST CHURCH.

Restored 1882.

relic attests the clear superiority in the polite arts of Philadelphia over Boston. It has in the comparison a distinct air of "gentility," to revive the eighteenth century word, while the Bostonian church, otherwise merely uncouth and ugly, derives a taint of vulgarity from its unsuccessfully pretentious spire. It is true that, while there is no reason to doubt that the Old South was fairly representative of the Boston of 1729, Christ Church may make an unduly favorable showing for the Philadelphia of that time. The next Philadelphia church to it in antiquity, St. Peter's, is thirty years younger (1758) and distinctly inferior, lacking, indeed, all the features that give distinction to the older building, except a chancel window correctly designed and detailed in wood, but deprived of its effect by the juxtaposition of other windows in a relation that seems entirely fortuitous. The steeple is positively ugly, the tower being a shaft of brick work pierced with openings without architectural relation to itself or to each other; and the spindling cone of the spire is abruptly and awkwardly set upon this, without any such attempt to soften the transition as the polygonal base that is the most successful feature in the design of Christ Church, and that needs only execution in monumental material to be a really monumental feature.

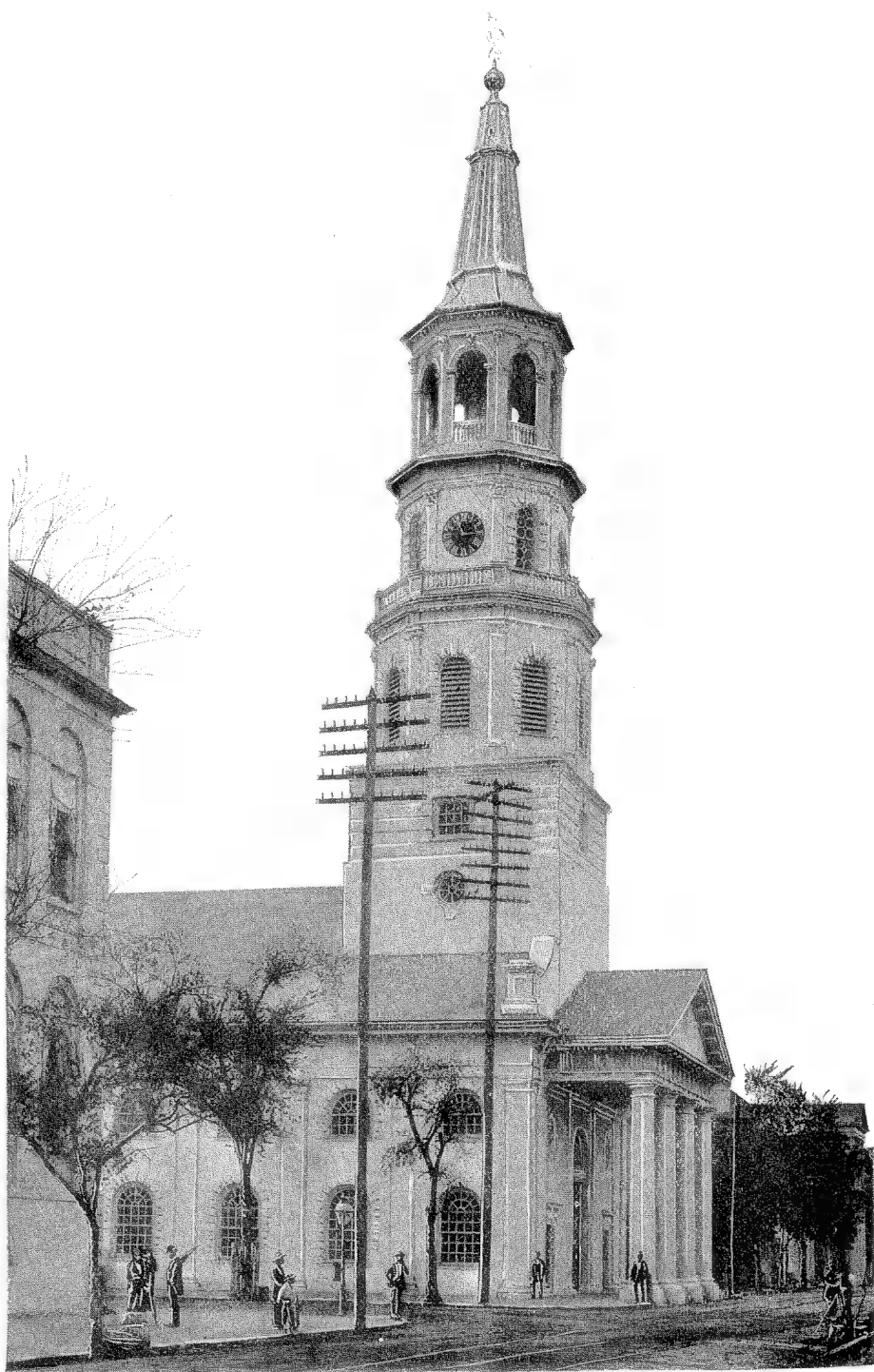
Within a few years, however, Christ Church had an architectural rival in the English colonies, and the rival was then esteemed to have the better of the competition. This was St. Philip's, in Charleston, said to have been completed in 1733. It is to this undoubtedly that Burke refers in the description of Charleston, contained in his "Account of the European Settlement in America (1757)." "The church is spacious and executed in a very handsome taste, exceeding everything of that kind which we have in America." Though Charleston was at a much earlier date divided into the parishes of St. Philip's and St. Michael's, and though the existing church of St. Michael's was begun in 1752, it was not opened for service until February, 1761. St. Philip's was burned in 1835, but in the rebuild-

ing the old church was reproduced, except that the spire was made taller, and now, but for the damage done to it by the earthquake of 1885, it still corresponds to the quaint account of its predecessor in "A Short Description of the Province of South Carolina" (London, 1763).

St. Philip's Church is one of the handsomest buildings in America. It is of brick, plastered and well enlightened on the inside. The roof is arched, except over the galleries (nave tunnel-vaulted), two rows of Tuscan pillars support the galleries and arch (vault) that extends over the body of the church, the pillars ornamented on the inside with fluted Corinthian pilasters, whose capitals are as high as the cherubins over the centre of each arch, supporting their proper cornice. The west end of the church is adorned with four Tuscan columns, supporting a double pediment, which has an agreeable effect; the two side-doors, which enter into the belfry, are ornamented with round columns of the same order, which support angular pediments that project a considerable way and give the church some resemblance of a cross. Pilasters of the same order with the columns are continued round the body of the church; over the double pediment is a gallery with bannisters; from this the steeple rises octagonal (*sic*) with windows to each face of the second course, ornamented with Doric pilasters, whose intabulation supports a balustrade: from this the tower still rises octagonal with sashed windows in every other face, till it is terminated by a dome, upon which stands a lanthorn for the bells, and from which rises a vane in the form of a cock.

The nave of St. Philip's is 74 feet long, the vestibule 37 and the portico 12, making the total exterior length 123 feet. The greatest width is 62. It would seem to have been inevitable that when the parishioners of St. Michael's came to build, they should strive to outdo their neighbors in dimensions as well as in "elegance." The extreme length of their church is 130 feet, the body 80 feet, and the steeple is 192 feet high, but the extreme width, 58 feet, is 4 feet less than that of the older church. The description of it from the same authority just cited, may serve to supplement, if not to elucidate the illustration.

St. Michael's Church is built of brick; it is not yet quite finished. It consists of a body of regular shape, and a lofty and well-proportioned steeple, formed of a tower and



Charleston, S. C.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH.

A. D. 1752-61.





Near Charleston, S. C.

GOOSE CREEK CHURCH,

Circa A. D. 1715.

spire; the tower is square from the ground, and in this form rises to a considerable height. The principal decoration of the lower part is a handsome portico with Doric (Roman-Doric) columns, supporting a large angular pediment, with modillion cornice; over this rise two square rustic courses; in the lower are small round windows on the north and south; in the other, small square ones on the east and west (on all four). From this the steeple rises octangular, having windows on each face, with Doric pilasters between each (*sic*), whose cornice supports a balustrade; the next course is likewise octagonal, has sashed windows and festoons alternately (festoons no longer, perhaps removed when the clock-faces were inserted) on each face, with pilasters and a cornice, upon which rises a circular range of Corinthian pillars, with a balustrade connecting them, from whence is a beautiful and extensive prospect. The body of the steeple is carried up octangular within the pillars, on whose entablature the spire rises, and is terminated by a gilt globe from which rises a vane in the form of a dragon.

One is not surprised to learn from another source that the steeple of St. Michael's was, during the whole colonial period, the chief landmark of the low Carolinian coast to incoming mariners, and it served the same purpose a century later for Confederate blockade runners. Of the architect of St. Philip's no tradition remains, though it is probable that the plans for it were procured in England. It does not betray, as even Christ Church in Philadelphia betrays, the hand of the amateur. It is certainly known that the design of St. Michael's was imported, and the *South Carolina Gazette*, of February 22, 1752, in describing the projected church, informs its readers that it was to be erected "from Mr. Gibson's designs." There is no architect of the period known by this name to fame, or even to tradition. But the most fashionable church architect in London in 1752, to whom the agent of the colonial church would naturally apply, was James Gibbs, who died in 1754, the designer of the Radcliffe Library at Oxford, and of the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields in London—then the most admired church since Wren's time. It is not at all unlikely that it was he who designed St. Michael's which certainly is worthy of him, or of any designer of the time. There are several examples in colonial

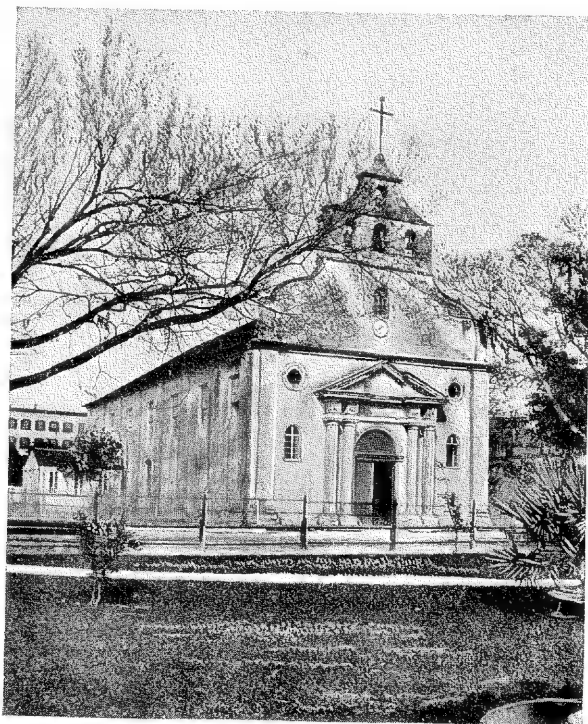
architecture of the conjunction, introduced by Hawksmoor a generation before and employed by Gibbs of a classic portico with a steeple modelled upon the steeples of Sir Christopher Wren. The conjunction is unfortunate in that it involves the standing of the spire on the roof, to keep it out of competition with the portico, and prevents its lines from being brought down to the visible support of the ground. This has been avoided in St. Paul's church in New York, by putting the steeple at one end of the church and the portico at the other, which is upon the whole a more eligible arrangement than that oftenest adopted in England and employed in St. Michael's, and in subsequent American churches; but the conjunction has seldom been better managed than in the present instance. St. Michael's is one of the most valuable remains of colonial times, a massive and dignified structure. If there were no other relic of those times in Charleston, we might still agree with the local historian who wrote in 1854, that in his youth "all our best buildings, public and private, were of provincial date," and apprehend that the saying might be repeated in 1894.

There is near Charleston a curious and interesting church which, in a chronological order, should have preceded the churches last described. This is St. James', at Goosecreek, on the Cooper River, which must have been finished before 1731, for in the "Descriptions of South Carolina, for Protestant Immigrants," published in that year, it is recorded that soon after 1706 "the church they first built became too small for the growing number of parishioners, and they erected a beautiful brick edifice." The brick is plastered, and the angles are quoined in stone. The general aspect of the building, exceptionally well preserved as it is, is not only antique but foreign. Except that its architecture is distinctly of the Renaissance, it has no architectural affinity with the churches of Charleston, or with any of the churches of the English settlements further to the north. On the other hand it has distinct affinities with the Spanish Renaissance, as that

was practiced in Mexico at an earlier date, and in Louisiana and Florida at a later. Its existence is explained by reference to the Spanish Settlements in the South, and to the indeterminate boundary between Florida and South Carolina, which was so often the cause of bloody affrays, but which in this instance seems to have resulted in an exchange of the arts of peace. A comparison of it with what is called the "Cathedral" of St. Augustine, though,

church at St. Augustine. The difference in date goes to prove an identity of origin by excluding the notion of a direct imitation; for, whereas the Carolinian church, as we have seen was finished before 1731, the Floridian church was built in 1793, under the supervision of two Spanish engineers, although Florida had been ceded to Great Britain in 1763.

There are few other interesting churches of the colonial period in the



CATHEDRAL OF ST. AUGUSTINE (1793).

in fact, it was built for a parish church, indicates that the design was furnished by a Spaniard, even if the work was not executed by Spanish craftsmen. It is quite plain that the unsightly hipped roof was not meant to be seen, and that the front was not completed. What exists indicates not less clearly that it would have been most naturally completed, and the design carried out by the superstructure of a false gable, such as that which covers the front of the

Southern States. In Virginia the earliest church of all is very nearly the best, having a simplicity and repose with its homeliness that are lacking to the more pretentious and not more skilful builders of a later day, and that come near to constituting an artistic quality. The New England meeting house of the eighteenth century, of which we have considered one of the most conspicuous examples, is entirely devoid of architectural interest or architect-



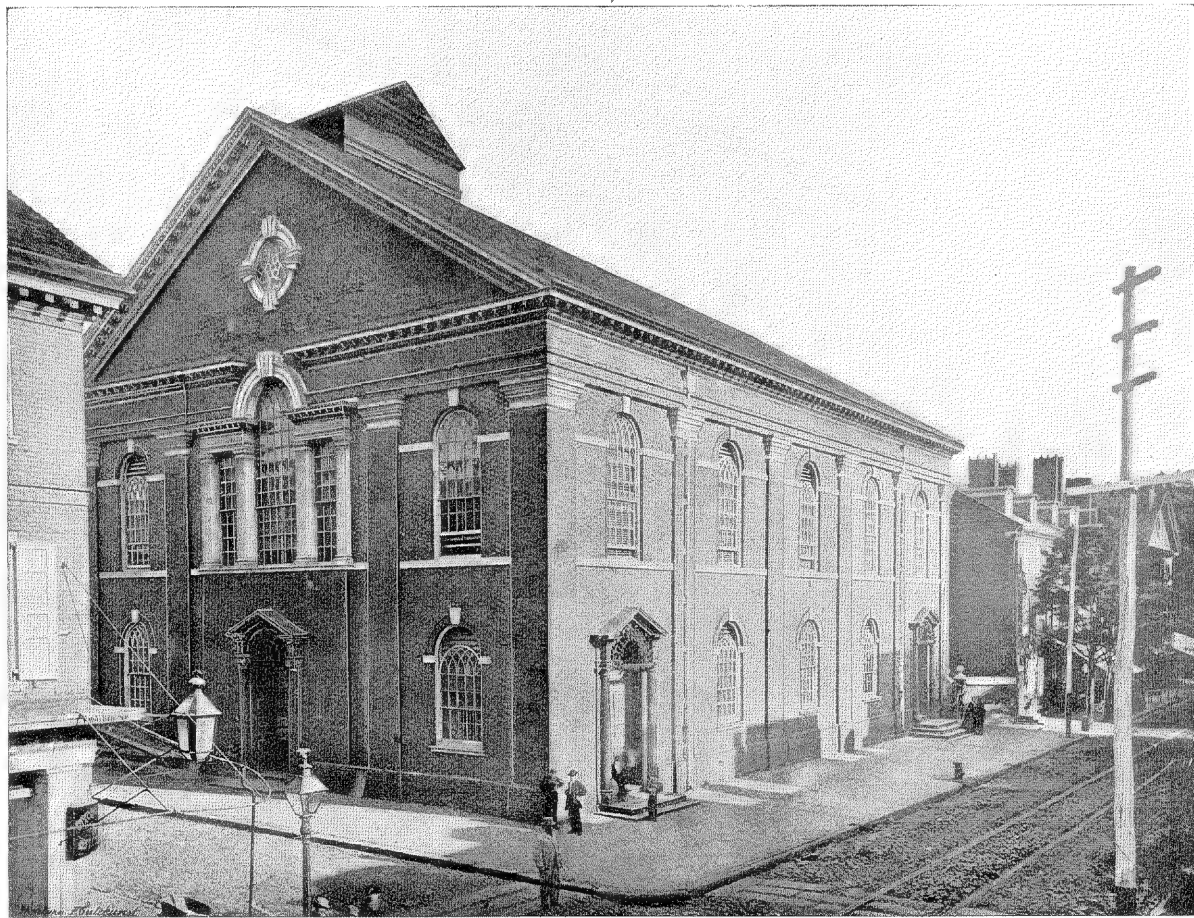
Philadelphia.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH.

A. D. 1758.







ZION CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.



A. D. 1802.

OLD ST. PETER'S CHURCH, ALBANY, N. Y.

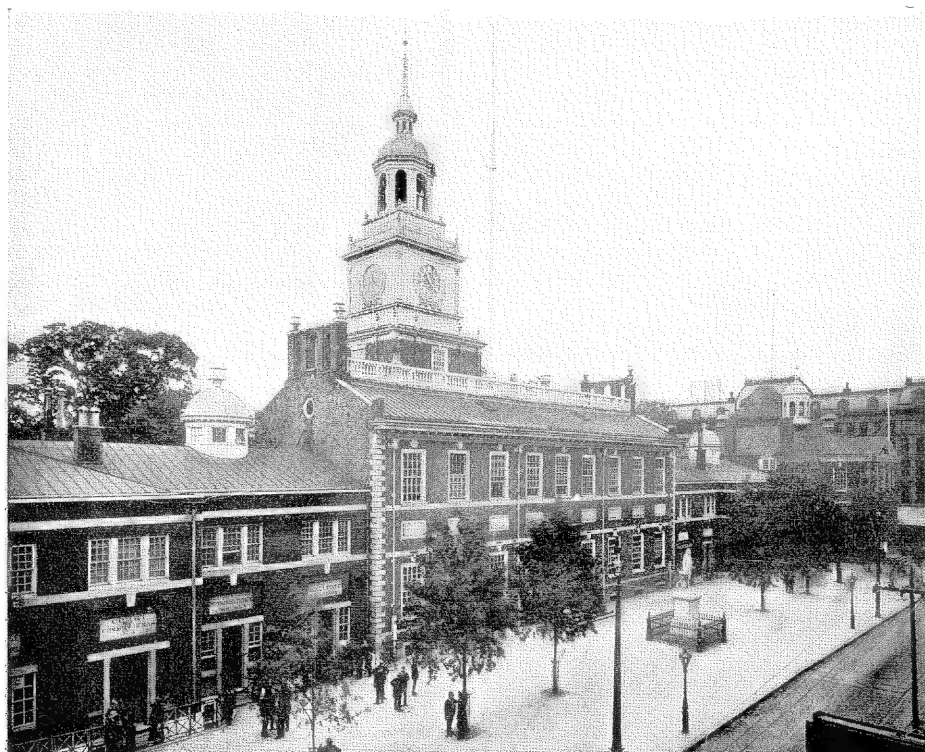
Philip Hooker, Architect.

ural purpose. The most bigoted praiser of time past has not ventured to suggest the vernacular New England meeting house as a promising point of departure in ecclesiastical architecture. In the middle colonies, however, there are many churches in which the type ultimately derived from the work of Sir Christopher Wren, has undergone local modifications that tend to render it national. This is the church of rough stone with quoins of hewn stones at the angles and the openings, with a tower slightly projected from the front, carrying a spire with several stages of classic detail, comprising one or more orders, of

which St. Peter's, Albany, 1802, is a favorable but not too favorable example; a seemly and not uncomely edifice. Of St. Paul's, in New York, Major Charles Pierre L'Enfant, afterwards the planner of Washington, was, at the time he was employed in altering the City Hall, described as the architect. But this is clearly out of the question, for the body of the church was built in 1764-66, and L'Enfant came out with D'Estaing only in 1777. What he did was very likely to add the east front, including the portico—not the spire which was erected within this century. The portico consists of four Ionic columns, the capitals of which those in the

City Hall resemble closely enough to have been imitated from them. At the centre they are so widely spaced, apparently to afford a full view of the chancel window, as not only to exceed classical precedent, but to threaten the integrity of the entablature if that had been actually of masonry. As a matter of fact it is of wood, the columns being of brick covered with stucco, painted to imitate brown sandstone. A very

In the order of development of the colonies civic buildings came after churches, and down to the middle of the eighteenth century were upon the whole inferior to them in size, costliness and architectural pretensions. In point of time, New York took the lead in the erection of a durable municipal monument. It was in 1700 that the City Hall was erected at the head of Broad street, which was to serve its



A. D. 1731-1735

INDEPENDENCE HALL, PHILADELPHIA.

James Hamilton, Architect.

good example of the type exemplified by St. Michael's at Charleston, in which the portico and the steeple are combined, is St. John's Church in New York, 1803-07, of which the architect was John McComb, the superintending architect and putative designer of the New York City Hall. In construction this is more substantial and genuine than St. Paul's, the columns, with their bases and Corinthian capitals being of cut stone, though ere also the entablature is of wood.

purpose for more than a century, or until the completion of the existing City Hall in 1811, excepting the brief interval during which, in an embellished state, and under the name of Federal Hall, it served as the capitol of the United States, an interval commemorated by the statue of Washington at the scene of his first inauguration as President. It was at the instigation of Lord Bellomont, Governor of the Province, that the project

was undertaken in 1698, in which year the plans of "James Evetts, architect," but doubtless in fact a mason, were adopted. The foundation was laid in 1699, and in the following year, as has been said, the building was occupied. The general scheme, of two wings and a recessed centre, about equal in extent to both, was much the same as that adopted for the building which superseded it, although the earlier building was on a much smaller scale, and of course far less elaborated. Indeed, the only attempt at decoration was in the brackets of the cornice, in the wooden lantern of the roof, in the balcony at the centre of the second story, and the coats-of-arms of the Governor (Bellomont) and the Lieutenant-Governor (Nanfan), emblazoned on stone tablets affixed to the front. In spite of its moderate dimensions, its humble material, which was apparently brick, with stone only in the sills and lintels, the binders which served as capitals to the square piers of the loggia and possibly the string course between the stories, the building was dignified and impressive by reason of the justness and, indeed, felicity of its proportions, and by its very absence of pretense. The cost was £3,000. When in 1789 it was decided to enlarge and improve the building for the occupancy of Congress \$32,000 was appropriated for the purpose, and the spending of it was intrusted to Major L'Enfant. His enlargement consisted in raising the roof so as to admit a low attic in place of the roof story lighted by dormers, of the original, and in an increase of height by the addition of an upper roof of somewhat lower pitch. The recessed centre was filled up with a wall in the plane of the wings, and from it a portico in two stories, and in Roman Doric was projected twelve feet. The frieze was divided so as to embrace thirteen metopes, in each of which was a star, and the centre of the pediment was dignified by a spread eagle. The alterations were much admired. John Page, who came to New York for the first session of Congress, as a representative from Virginia, writing home, after saying that "this town is not half so large as Philadelphia, nor in

any manner to be compared with it for beauty and elegance," and that he is "well assured Philadelphia has more inhabitants than New York and Boston together," goes on to say that "the college, St. Paul's Church, and the Hospital are elegant buildings. The Federal Hall also in which Congress is to sit is elegant." Thomas Twining, an English traveller who visited New York in 1793, found it the only building worth looking at, or at least worth mentioning.

The oldest of the secular public buildings of Philadelphia, more famous and memorable than that of New York whether as City or as Federal Hall, is fortunately still standing and in perfect preservation. It is the building which for more than a century has been known as Independence Hall, but which, for the first half-century of its existence, was the State House of Pennsylvania. It is almost exactly coeval with Christ Church (1731-1735), shows an equal skill in workmanship and the same method, the use of black glazed headers with red brick. In one point, at least, the free use of cut stone, the workmanship shows an advance, for tooled ashlar are employed in the quoining at the corners, in the panels and the string courses, while the keystones of the flat brick arches required an even higher degree of skill in stone-cutting. Of this also the architect was an amateur, a lawyer, James Hamilton by name, and his design was as successful for its purpose as that of the church. The dimensions of the building are 100 feet by 44, and they are made the most of by the emphasis added to the horizontal lines and the limitation of the whole front to a single plane, while the relation of the stories to each other and the interpolation of a third term in the paneled band inclosed between the string-courses, make up a well-proportioned composition and relieve the long front of monotony. The effect of length is enhanced and variety at the same time added by the judicious addition of the lower flanking buildings, the one the old City Hall of Philadelphia, the other Congress Hall, which furnished quarters for the executive officers during

the Revolution. The tower, though it has refinement of detail, is scarcely so fortunate as that of Christ Church either in its design or in its adjustment to the building which it crowns. Carpenters' Hall, the next most important secular relic of colonial times, is fifty years younger than the State House (1770), inferior to it in dimensions, and in spite of its pediments and its arches, so similar in design and workmanship as to show an extreme conservatism, which is the more remarkable by its contrast with the recently prevalent rage for innovation in Philadelphia building.

"The great commodiousness of navigation and the scarcity of handicraftsmen" were assigned by Burke, and no doubt rightly, as the causes which "have rendered all the attempts of the government to establish towns in Virginia ineffectual." When the planter had his own wharf on his own estate, from which he sent his produce directly to his agent in London or Bristol, and at which he received his supplies directly in return, he had no need of a market-town. The Virginian village was a "court-house;" the town was a capital. The peculiar situation of Virginia in this respect is worth consideration by the student of colonial society in general, as well as by the student of colonial architecture in particular, for it is intimately connected with the social and political history of the colony. Burke goes on to say that "Jamestown, which was anciently the capital, is dwindled into an insignificant village; and Williamsburg, though the capital at present (1757), is yet but a small town." "However," he adds, "in this town are the best public buildings in British America." In view of what we have just seen of Philadelphia at this time we must challenge the accuracy of Burke's information. It appears that he was misled by an extremely rosy view taken by Hugh Jones, A. M., in the "Present State of Virginia," 1723, which Burke paraphrases and almost repeats. The college of William and Mary is held by many Virginians, as an article of faith, to have been designed by Sir Christopher Wren, but this belief is overthrown by the very testimony on

which it is founded. It would be a grievous thing to ascribe the design of the actual building to Sir Christopher. Jones says: "The college of William and Mary is double and 136 feet long, having been first modeled by Sir Christopher Wren, adapted to the nature of the country by the gentlemen there, and, *since it was burnt down*, it has been rebuilt, nicely contrived, altered and adorned, by the ingenious direction of Governor Spotswood, and is not altogether unlike Chelsea Hospital." But it is not even the restoration of Spotswood that is now to be seen, for his work was also destroyed by fire, in 1746, to be replaced by the present building, of which the architectural origin is neither known nor important. The colonial capital has also disappeared, having been burned down in April, 1832. It confronted the college at the other end of what Burke calls "a noble street," and conformed to it in architecture; and the colonial church (1715) is still standing, although the interior has been altered. The capitol was built "at the cost of the late queen" before 1723, and Jones says "it is the best and most commodious pile of its kind I have seen or heard of." He adds: "The buildings here described are justly reputed the best in English America, and exceeded by few of their kind in England." One may reasonably suspect Jones of an ignorance of Philadelphia, as well as of an inordinate desire to please Governor Spotswood. A less rosy but more accurate view is given in Jefferson's "Notes on Virginia:"

"The only public buildings worthy of mention are the Capitol, the College, the Palace, and the Hospital for Lunatics, all of them in Williamsburg, heretofore the seat of our government. The Capitol is a light and airy structure, with a portico in front of two orders, the lower of which, being Doric, is tolerably just in its proportions and ornaments, save only that the intercolonations are too large. The upper is Ionic, much too small for that on which it is mounted, its ornaments not proper to the order, nor proportioned within themselves. It is crowned with a pediment, which is too high for its span. Yet, on the whole, it is the most pleasing piece of architecture we have. The College and the Hospital are rude, misshapen piles, which but that they have roofs would be taken for brick kilns."



The tradition that Sir Christopher had something to do with the existing architecture of Williamsburg refuses to be altogether dislodged, and has alighted upon the Court House, which is the only remaining relic in Williamsburg, excepting the College, of colonial secular architecture. In a very recent publication it is ascribed to him, though it is quite evident that it had no architect except the colonial mechanic who

Burke says: "I shall be very concise in my account of Maryland which, agreeing with Virginia in its climate, soil, products, trade and genius of its inhabitants \* \* \* will save much trouble in that article." But the capital, chartered in 1708, and named in honor of Princess Anne, not yet Queen, was, relatively to the population of the colony, if not absolutely, a more important place than the capital of Virginia, dur-



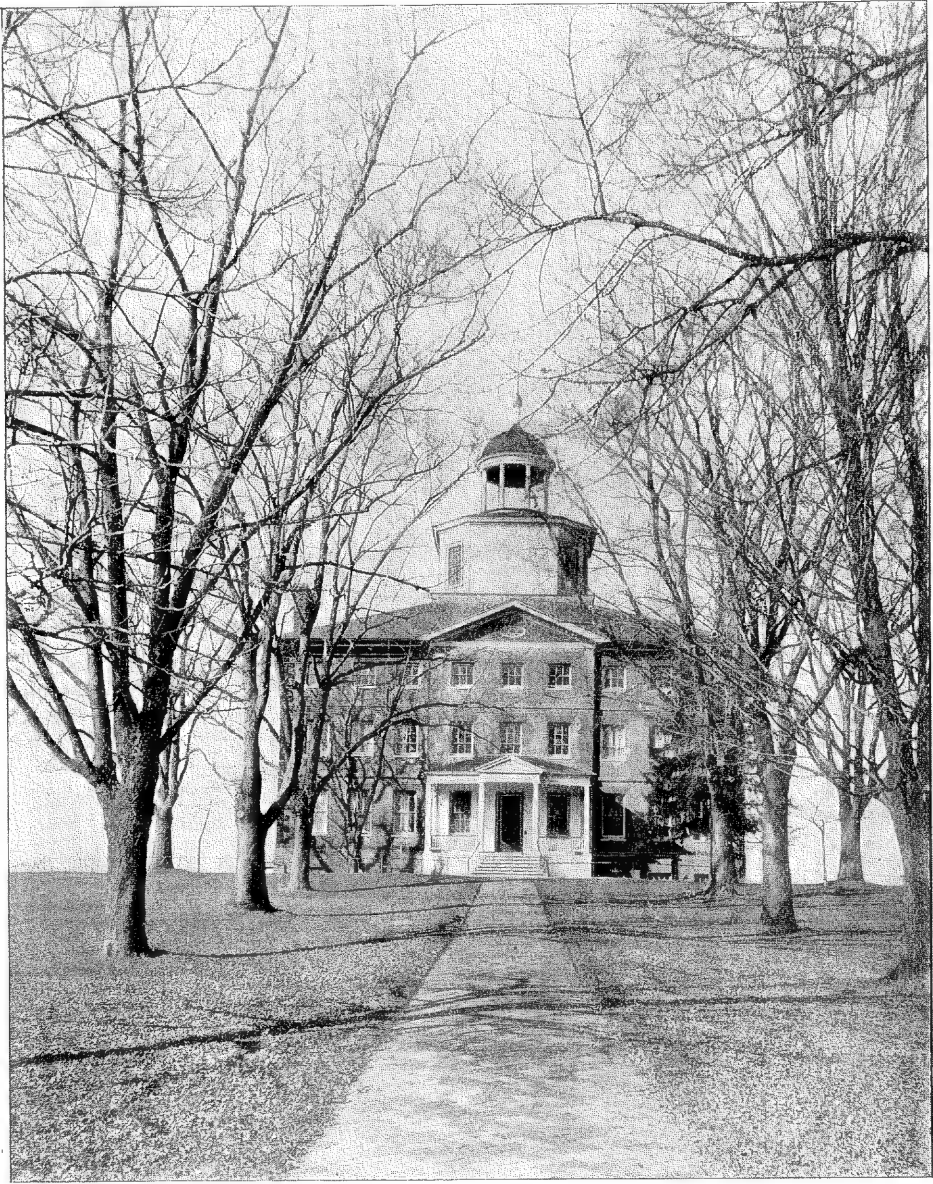
THE COURT HOUSE, WILLIAMSBURG, VA.

From Chandler's "The Old Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia."

built it. A similar tradition retains its hold about the steeple of the oldest church in Providence, R. I., which is in another recent publication declared to be by Wren, although when the steeple was built, in 1775, the architect had been half a century in his grave.

After it was given over, like Virginia, to the culture of tobacco, Maryland became in most respects an extension of the Old Dominion, insomuch that

ing the colonial period. The commercial sceptre passed to Baltimore before the colonial period was completed, and commercial stagnation left Annapolis a relic of those times, insomuch that it is now, upon the whole, to a student of colonial architecture, the most interesting town in the United States, as retaining its ancient aspect least impaired. Its claims upon his attention were urged in Mr. Randall's interesting



Annapolis

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE.

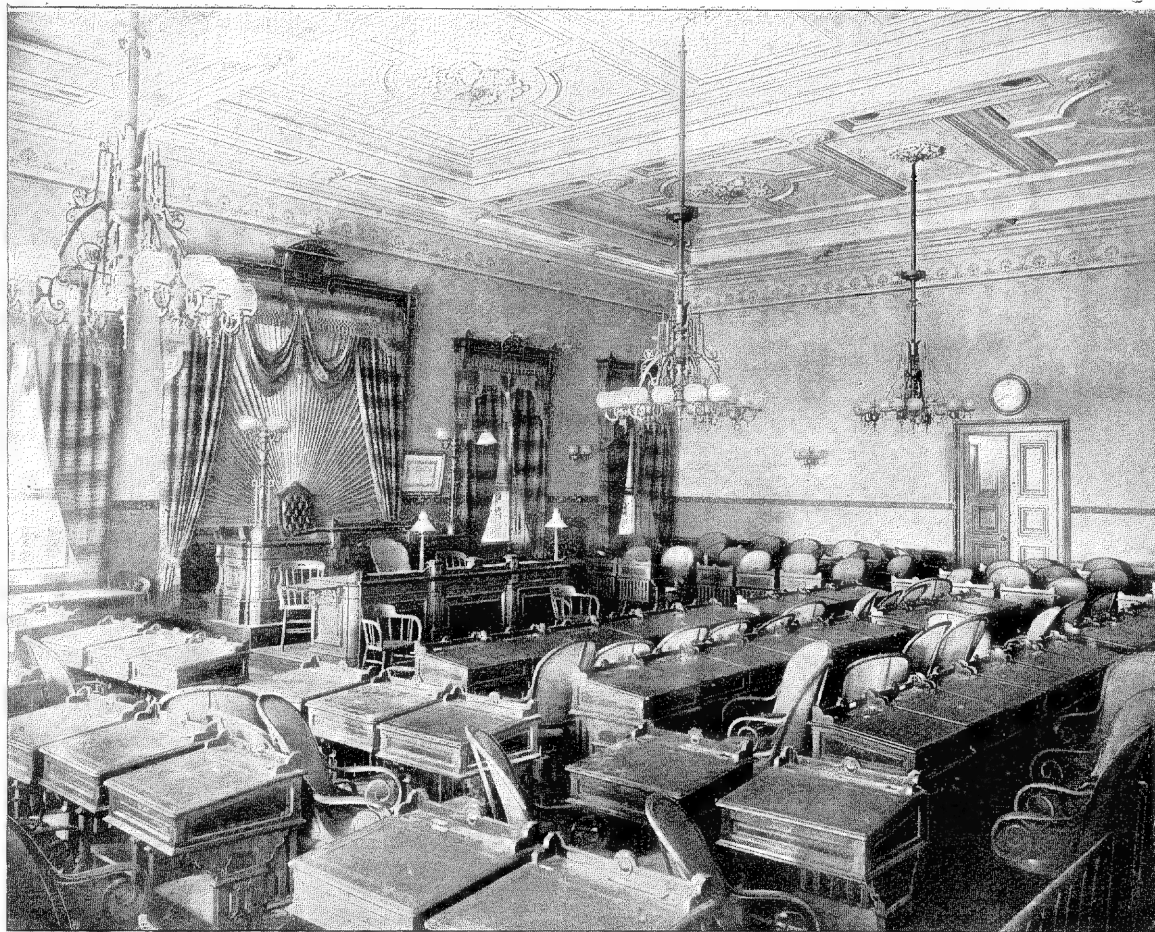
1744-85.



Annapolis, 1772-3.

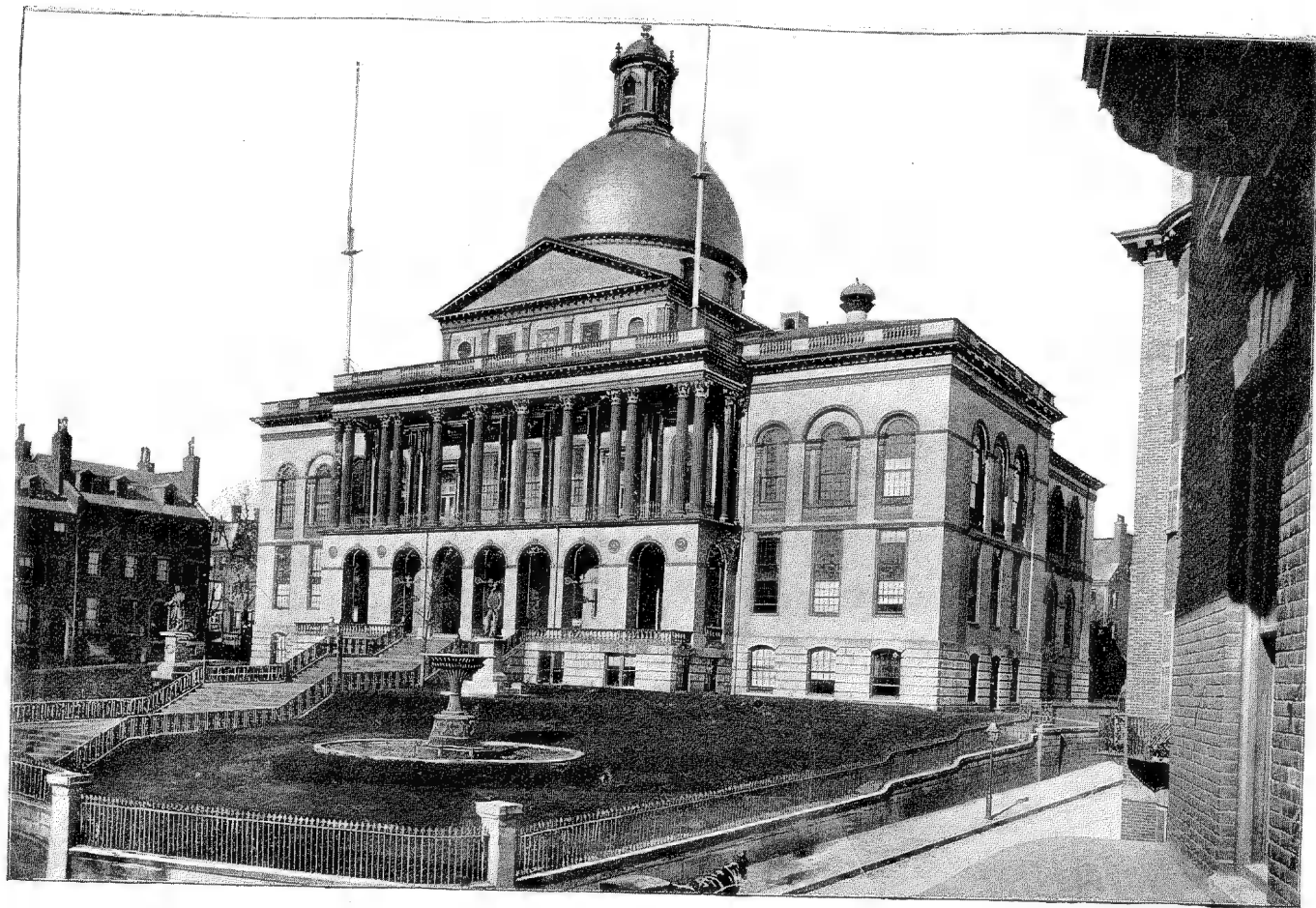
STATE HOUSE.

Joseph Clarke, Architect.



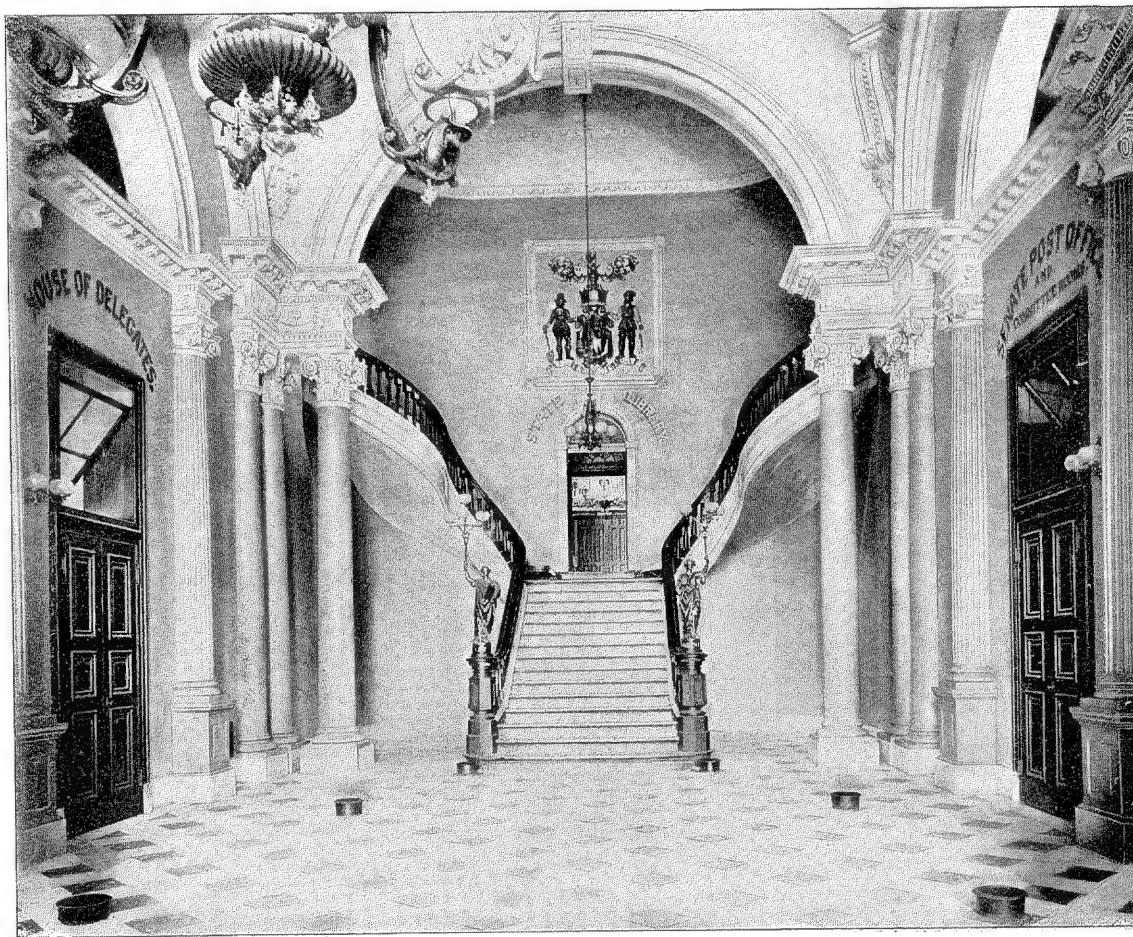
HOUSE OF DELEGATES, MARYLAND.





STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, MASS.





Annapolis,

ROTUNDA, STATE HOUSE,

The architecture is confined mainly to the Doric portico, of which the columns are 17 feet high and which is projected 9 feet from the face of the building. These two works of Harrison are noteworthy, as probably the only remaining buildings in New England erected before the Revolution from the designs of a professional architect. Neither the old State House nor Faneuil Hall in Boston now remains in its primitive condition. The former, erected in 1748, had originally its broken gable and tower, but the design of the roof has since been materially modified, and the latter was enlarged towards the close of the century under the direction of Bulfinch. But what remains of provincial Boston suffices to show its architectural inferiority to the seaports to the south of it.

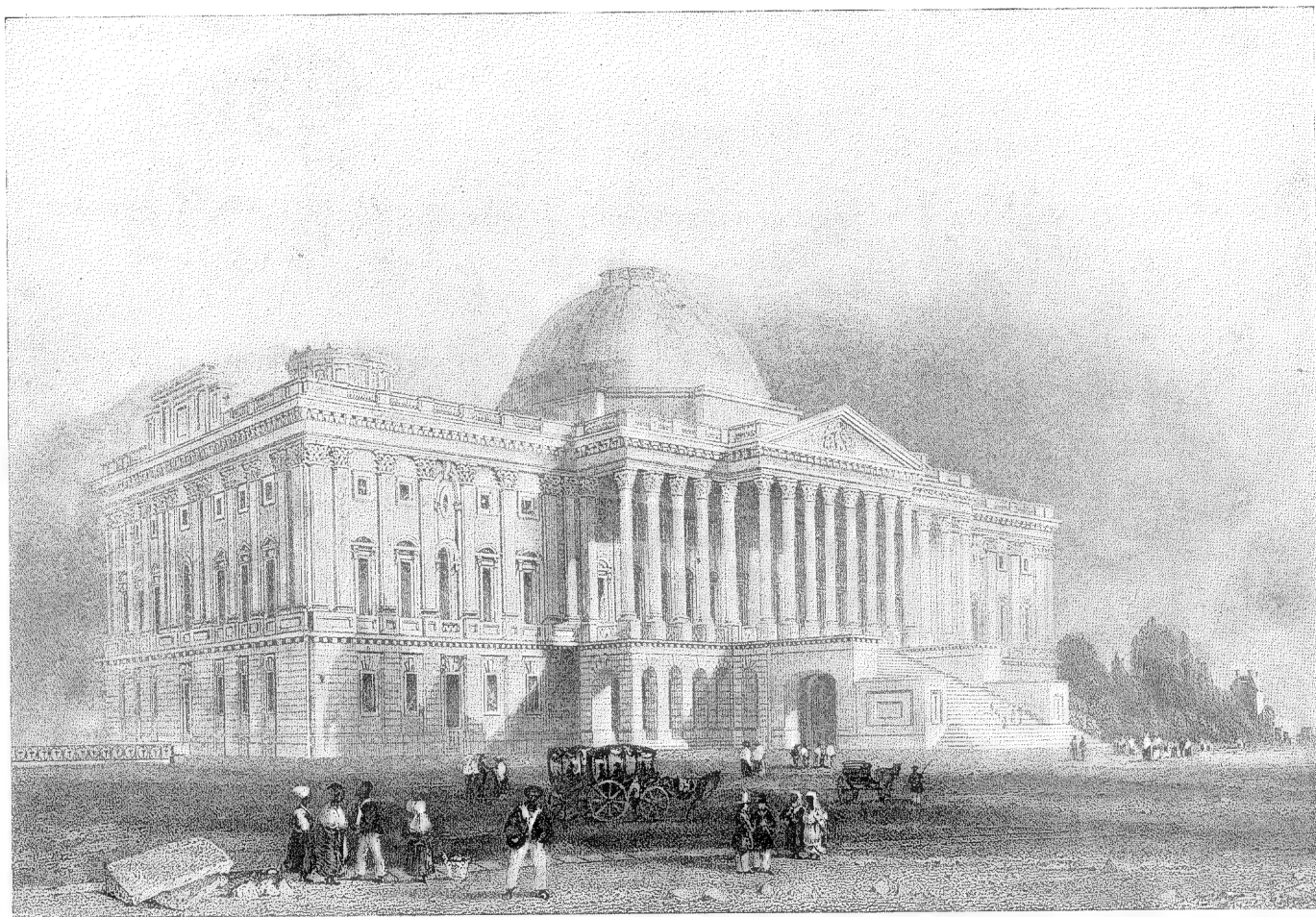
A Bostonian, however, is memorable as the first educated American who devoted himself to the profession of architecture. Charles Bulfinch, born in Boston in 1763, was graduated at Harvard in 1781, and three years later spent a year in Europe. In 1793 he superintended the erection of the first theatre in Boston, the erection being in itself a relaxation of Puritanical severity that was of good augury for the progress of the polite arts. The design of the theatre, a scholarly front in two stories, with a tetrastyle portico and a pediment in the upper, survives only in the complimentary medal struck for Bulfinch by his employers. In 1795 he was appointed architect of the new State House of Massachusetts and for three years superintended its construction. At the time of its completion, excepting the Capitol at Washington, then in course of construction, it was the most monumental public building that had been projected in the United States, and its architecture deserved the celebrity which it obtained. In general composition it is very successful. The superstructure of two stories is sharply distinguished from the basement, while its subdivision suffices to relieve it of monotony without compromising its unity. The flatness of the wings, the want of visible depth in the walls, and the want of emphasis in the

subdivision and the detail are distinctly defects of colonial work. The treatment of the centre, however, is as distinctly an innovation, and shows that the architect had studied continental as well as English Renaissance. For the first time in America, the order is superposed upon an arcade, after the manner introduced by Mansard at Versailles, and afterwards employed by Latrobe in the Capitol of the United States and repeated in the extension by Walter, the columns of the order are properly doubled at the ends, and the pediment is withdrawn from the order, to appear above it on the substructure of the cupola. The adjustment of the cupola to its base, always a difficult point of design, is here managed with reasonable skill if not with entire felicity. From an inspection of the building one can understand the admiring wonder with which it was received, and how it should have become the fruitful parent of so many less respectable domed buildings in State Houses throughout the land, and even, as we shall see, in the national Capitol. It is not only remarkable, considering the period at which it was erected, but it remains a dignified and creditable public building, worthy of perpetuation in more monumental material than that in which it was originally executed.

The great architectural work of those years and of many years thereafter was the Capitol of the United States. It was in 1795, after Major L'Enfant had planned the "Federal City," that President Washington appointed a board of three commissioners to provide for the erection of suitable public buildings. They decided that the Capitol should exhibit "that true elegance of propriety which corresponds to a tempered freedom," and advertised for designs for such a building to be submitted July 15, 1792. They set forth that it was to be of brick, and issued a very general programme of requirements, embracing fifteen rooms in all. The advertisement brought no designs that seemed to the commissioners worthy of adoption, although Washington wrote that

he was more agreeably struck with Judge Turner's plan than with any other, mainly because it had a dome, which, in the President's judgment, "would give a beauty and grandeur to the pile," but it did not have the "porticos and imposing colonnade," upon which he equally insisted. Other designs were submitted, and on April 5, 1793, the President gave his formal approval to the plan submitted by Dr. William Thornton, because in it "grandeur, simplicity and convenience were combined," and the first prize of \$500 and a building lot in the new city was awarded accordingly. But the same award was also made to Stephen Hallet. Like the architect of Christ Church, Philadelphia, Dr. Thornton was a physician of that town, entirely an amateur in architecture, and Hallet, a Frenchman, who was a professional architect, and had practiced in Philadelphia, had no difficulty in showing that Thornton's design was impracticable, and that if it could be built the building would not be habitable. Accordingly, he was chosen to revise Thornton's plan, but the resulting design resembled the original more than the reviser's own competitive design. It is noteworthy that it retained what Jefferson called "that very capital beauty," the portico of the east front. That Thornton was really the original designer is sufficiently shown in a letter of Jefferson's, written in 1811, in which he says that having been convinced, during his Presidency, that the interior arrangements could be improved, he "deemed it due to Dr. Thornton, author of the plan of the Capitol, to consult him on the change." Hallet became the architect of the Capitol, but kept the place for only two years, and was succeeded in 1794 by James Hoban, an Irishman, who had done architectural work in South Carolina and had been employed as Superintendent under Hallet. Indeed his functions in connection with the Capitol seem to have been chiefly of superintendence during his entire connection with it, which lasted for ten years, the work being done after the drawings first of Hallet and then of George Hadfield, an

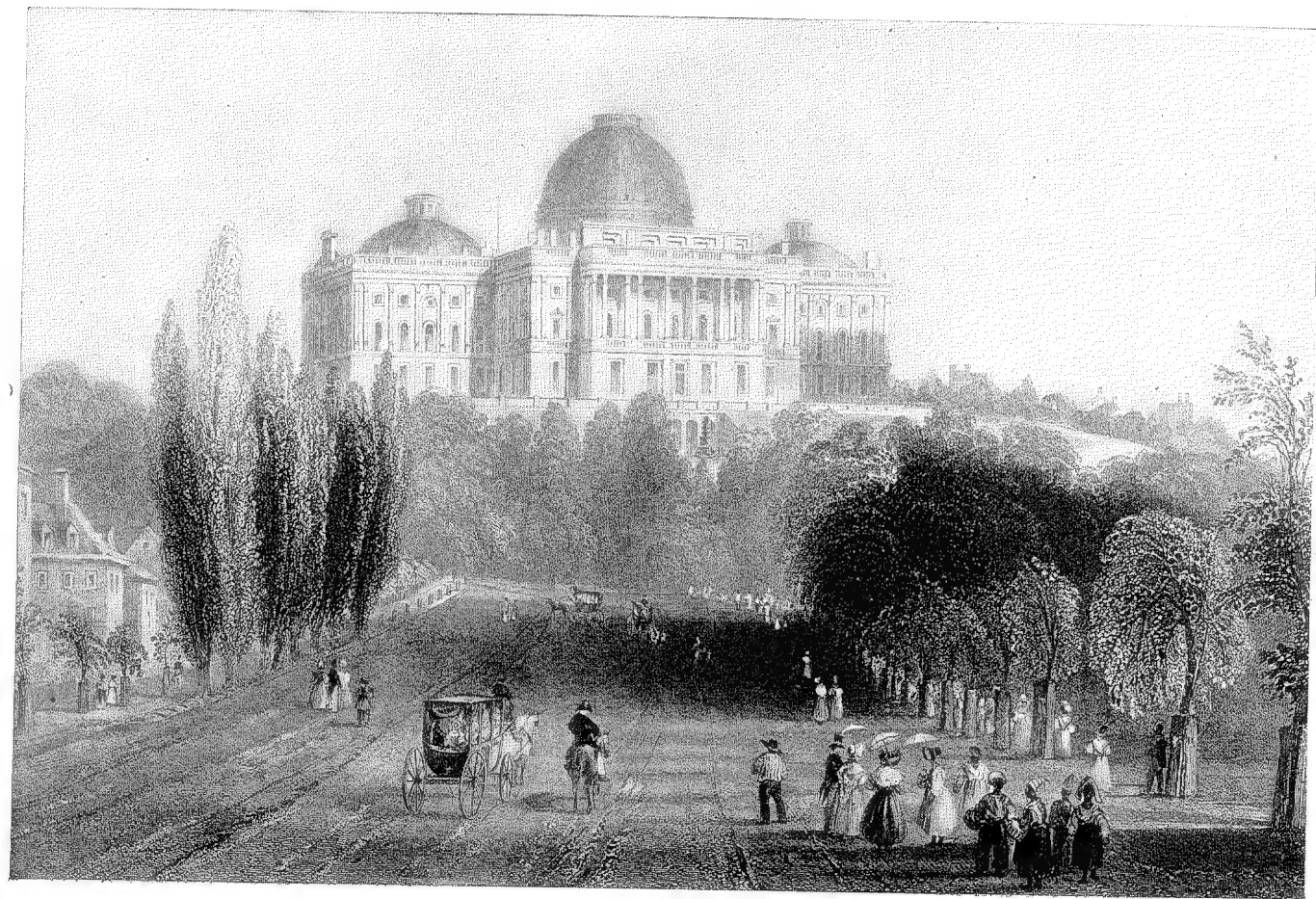
English architect, who came to Washington highly recommended. Hallet had been dismissed by the Commissioners in consequence of a quarrel with Hoban and refused to surrender his drawings. Hadfield, who became architect in 1795, insisted that the plan under which Hoban was working was "capitally defective," but was overruled by Washington and by the Commissioners, and afterwards declined to hand over to Hoban for execution his accepted plans for the Executive Department buildings. His connection with the Capitol as architect came to an end in 1798, and the working drawings from that year until 1803 seem to have been furnished by Hoban. It does not seem, however, that Hoban can be called the designer of any part of the building, although he furnished the designs for the original Executive Mansion, and for its rebuilding after its destruction by the British. This was and is a dignified and even stately mansion, and does credit to the taste of its architect, if not to his power of design, since it was reproduced in all architectural essentials from a nobleman's mansion in Ireland. Hadfield was again employed as chief draughtsman under Latrobe, who became architect of the Capitol in 1803, and remained until 1817, carrying the building to the state of completion which it had reached at the time of the burning by the British in 1814, and restoring it after that interruption. Architecturally the burning, outrageous act of vandalism though it was, was by no means calamitous, since it enabled Latrobe to restore both interior and exterior with more monumental material and doubtless with more successful details. The changes necessarily cost money, and the additional cost embarrassed the architect and his employers. In the same letter of Jefferson to Latrobe, already quoted, he says "You discharged your duties with ability, diligence and zeal, but in the article of expense you were not sufficiently guarded." The labors of Latrobe undoubtedly determined the general arrangement of the Capitol, as we now see it, excepting the wings and the dome, and left his immediate successor little latitude except in de-



Washington.

EAST FRONT OF THE CAPITOL.

1793-1830.



Washington.

WEST FRONT OF THE CAPITOL.

1793-1830.



tail. When in 1817, Latrobe found himself unable to agree with the single commissioner who, during his service had been substituted for the Board of Commissioners previously established, and resigned, he was succeeded by Bulfinch, who had met the new president, Monroe, in Boston, and had favorably impressed him. He modified the designs for such parts of the building as were not committed by construction, but in the main proceeded upon the lines laid down by Latrobe. The chief alteration he made was very questionable, being the change of the form of the dome into a cupola more nearly resembling in outline that of the Massachusetts State House, and the construction of a subordinate dome over each wing. In spite of its defects, however, the Capitol, as Bulfinch left it completed in 1830, was creditable to the country and to its own architects, the finest as well as the last development of colonial architecture. Its extreme dimensions were then 355 feet by 121, and 120 feet to the top of the dome.\*

The influence of Thomas Jefferson upon American architecture was very considerable. His interest in it began at least as early as his rebuilding of Monticello, in 1770, and increased until the close of his life. He adopted, without question, the current dogma that the five orders were founded in the nature of things, and that architecture was an affair of orders exclusively, but he held that innovations might be made upon them to express other than antique conditions. The "American order" was for a long time attributed to him, and it may have been at his instigation that Latrobe undertook to supplant the acanthus with the maize and tobacco plant, in the decoration of capitals, and made the interesting essays to that end that still remain in the Capitol; though it has been clearly shown that Latrobe was the designer of the "order." The progress of the

Capitol, during his presidency, revived in Jefferson the interest of his early manhood. In rebuilding his own house, he had been forced to become his own architect and almost his own builder. So low was the state of the mechanic arts in Virginia in 1770, that the window-sashes were imported from London. In his "Notes on Virginia" (1781), he complains that "a workman could scarcely be found here capable of drawing an order." "The genius of architecture," he continues, "seems to have shed its maledictions over this land. \* \* \* The first principles of the art are unknown, and there exists scarcely a model among us sufficiently chaste to give an idea of them."

The first fruit in a public building of his architectural zeal was the Capitol of Virginia, at Richmond, commonly, but inaccurately, said to have been designed by him. After the change of the capital from Williamsburg to Richmond, and in 1785, Jefferson, being then in Paris, was consulted with reference to the design of the new State House, and he consulted "M. Clarissault, one of the most correct architects of France." The capitol, according to Jefferson himself, is "the model of the temple of Erechtheus at Athens, of Baalbec, and of the Maison Carrée at Nismes, the most perfect examples of cubic architecture, as the Pantheon is of the spherical." (The reasoning and the collocation have alike a seriously old-fashioned air to modern students.) Jefferson goes on to say that the Maison Carrée was selected more specifically, retaining the proportions while enlarging the building, but with the change of the capitals from Corinthian to Ionic, "on account of the expense." Throughout the colonial period, indeed, the Corinthian order was very little employed, doubtless because of the extreme difficulty and costliness of reproducing the capital in wood. Not only were Ionic capitals substituted for Corinthians, but "I yielded with reluctance to the taste of Clarissault in his preference of the modern capital of Scamozzi to the more noble capital of antiquity." The Capitol is 134 feet by 70 in area and 45 high, excluding the basement.

\* I do not pretend to reconcile the discrepancy between the two views of the Capitol. Both were drawn by W. H. Bartlett, though they were rendered by different engravers, and both were published after 1830. It is possible that the artist never saw the building, and probable that the view of the east front shows Latrobe's design for the dome, the taller dome and the subordinate domes in the view of the west front being Bulfinch's.

Undoubtedly, the most considerable outcome of Jefferson's interest in architecture was the last. The University of Virginia, of which he desired to be commemorated in his epitaph as the father, was the child of his old age, and it was the formation of this institution that was his chief care from his retirement from the presidency in 1809 until his death in 1826. He was unquestionably and alone the architect of it, and after the aid of the State had been pro-

the dormitories of the students, accentuated at intervals by the "pavilions" which consisted of professors' houses. The long vista between these colonnades was to be closed by a reproduction, one third the original size, and considerably modified, of the Pantheon, "the most perfect example of the spherical." The most important of the modifications is the omission of the second attic and pediment. Against the rear of this abuts the posticum



STREET FRONT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

Charlottesville, Va.

A. D. 1819-26.

Thomas Jefferson, Architect.

cured by the Act of 1819, he pushed on the execution of his architectural project until it was in great part realized, and the institution in actual operation before his death. His project was grandiose and impressive. The buildings were to line three sides of a quadrangle, 600 feet by 200, the fourth side being left open. The curtain wall of the long side was to be a continuous colonnade of one-story high, being the front of

of an amphiprostylar Corinthian temple, for which the Maison Carrée seems to have furnished the model, and to have retained in Jefferson's mind for thirty years its place as "the most perfect example of cubic architecture." The portico, hexastyle and three columns deep, as at Nîmes, forms the main entrance to the University, and was evidently intended to be finished by an imposing terraced approach with double flights of steps. The scheme

was completed by two additional ranges of dormitories, facing outward, parallel with the ranges facing the campus and 200 feet distant from them.

Considering the resources available for carrying it into execution, Jefferson's scheme was incomparably the most ambitious and monumental architectural project that had or has yet been conceived in this century. If the execution was not at all points ade-

quate, it must be admitted to have been very surprising for a remote Virginian village. The campus of the University of Virginia as it now appears, has far more unity, dignity and impressiveness than the heterogeneous "college-yard" of any other American institution of learning. It is not strictly colonial in style, but in great part a prefigurement of the Greek revival which was shortly to supplant colonial architecture. The professors' houses, the "pavil-

ions" of the architectural scheme, mark the first appearance of the classic temple in domestic architecture. The portico ignores the house, and an undivided order embraces the front, leaving the balcony to be inserted as a gallery, an arrangement fatal to the architectural effect. The pavilions in which this device is resorted to are as much less attractive as they are less practically eligible than those in which the colon-



Charlottesville, Va.

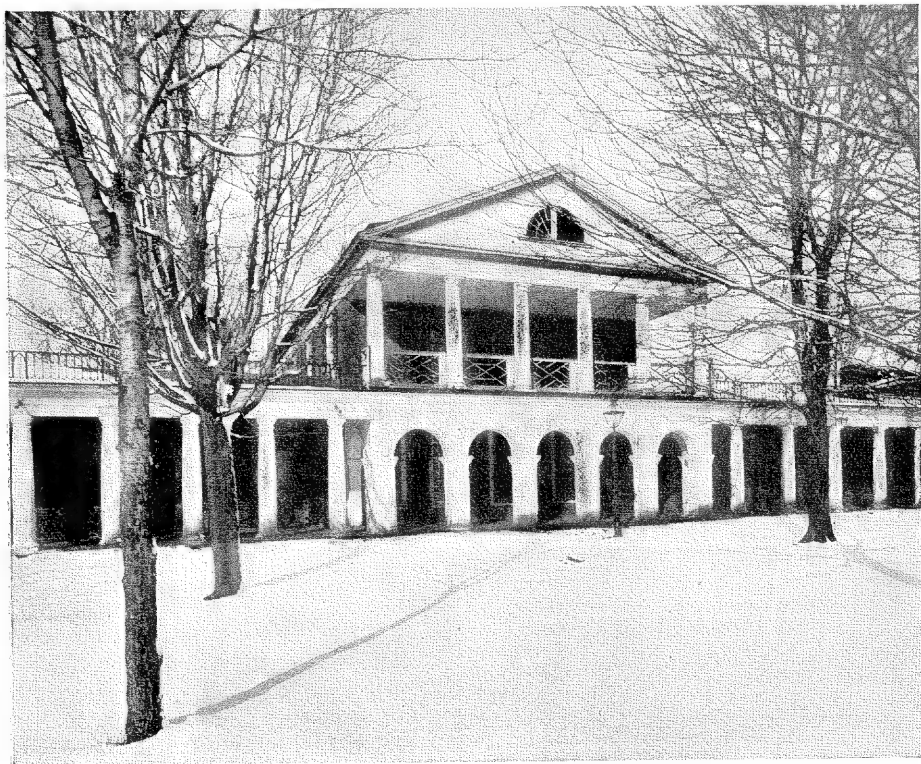
CAMPUS FRONT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

nade is continued across the front in the form of an arcade, and supports the order of the second story, in which its material is confessed in a departure from classical proportions and the "too wide intercolonations" with which the youthful Jefferson had found fault in the old Capitol of Virginia. The material of the monumental buildings of the University, though not always genuine, is solid and durable, and enough of it is genuine to increase the wonder that

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such a project could have been carried out during the first quarter of the century. The capitals and bases of the large columns are of marble, cut in Italy; the shafts of brickwork covered with stucco, of which also the colonnades of the dormitories are built. It is evident that Jefferson in his architectural zeal subjected himself to his own admonition to Latrobe and "in the article of expense" was "not

which was under construction for the ensuing eight years, and indeed longer, though it was occupied in 1811. It remains the most admirable specimen of architecture belonging to the city, being effective in its composition, and of careful and scholarly design in its detail. In mechanical execution it was very far in advance of any building that had then been erected in New York or in the country, and showed that a



HOUSE AND DORMITORIES ON THE CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.

sufficiently guarded," for before the University was opened what was then the enormous sum of \$300,000 had been spent upon it, and this extravagance combined with Jefferson's selection of a President tainted with Unitarianism to bring the University into popular disfavor and to make its early history one of continual struggle.

It was in 1803 that the corner stone was laid of the City Hall of New York,

body of stone-cutters had become available who could carry out with great precision and even with spirit an extensive design which involved a profuse use of carved decoration. It is noteworthy that in the discussion concerning the material to be employed, which resulted in the choice of marble for three of the fronts, it was an architectural emulation of Philadelphia that was invoked, although the Massachusetts



OLD ACADEMY, ALBANY, N. Y.

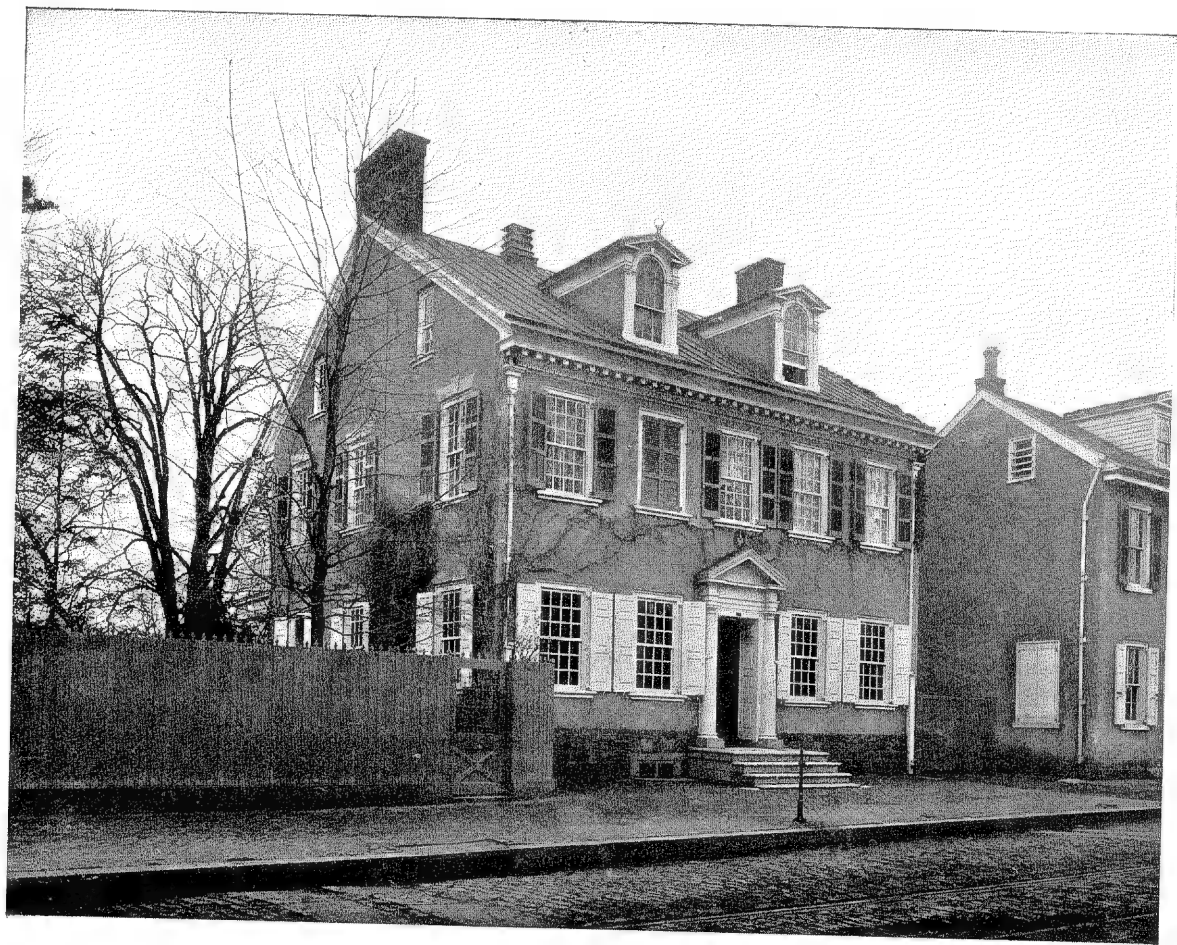


State House, a much more monumental edifice than existed elsewhere in the United States, had been completed for five years. The report of the building committee in favor of the use of marble, made in September, 1803, sets forth that seeing "that as a commercial city we claim a superior standing, our imports and exports exceeding any other in the United States, we certainly ought, in this pleasing state of things, to possess at least one public building which shall vie with the many now erected in Philadelphia and elsewhere." The appeal was successful. The building was constructed with three fronts of marble from Massachusetts, and with one, then the least conspicuous, of brown sandstone from New Jersey. The frontage of the building is 215 feet 9 inches. Its cost was not far from \$500,000.

John McComb was the architect of record of the City Hall, but an obstinate tradition affirms that the actual designer was a Frenchman named Mangin. The denial of the authorship to McComb certainly receives some support from the most interesting and successful of the buildings of the same period at Albany, the Academy. This was begun in 1815, four years after the completion of the City Hall, and finished in 1818. The design bears marks of colonial building, from which the earlier building is free, such as the emphasis given to the construction of the walls in two planes, very frequent in brickwork of the colonial period. But the resemblance of the two buildings in design is nevertheless very striking, and as evidently is not the result of direct imitation on the part of the designer of the more recent; while the detail in each case shows a like knowledge and propriety. McComb was certainly not the architect of the Albany Academy, whose name is given as Seth Geer. If we accept this and the corresponding record in respect to the New York building as final, we are required to believe that two untraveled Americans had acquired architectural training enough to design buildings of considerable elaboration and novelty as well as the power, then common among well-trained carpenters, of applying the

forms of the classic orders without committing solecisms. It seems simpler to believe that the two employed the same educated foreigner as draughtsman and designer. Though the Albany Academy is much smaller and less costly than the City Hall, having but 90 feet of frontage, and costing but \$90,000, it justifies the praise of the author of a "Description of Albany" in 1823, as "a large and elegant pile of masonry, in design and execution the most chaste in the city;" for the only other secular public building then extant was the old Capitol begun in 1810, and lately demolished to make room for the new. This was much less considerable than the Academy, being in a coarse version of classic with a Corinthian portico of columns of brickwork veneered with marble, reeded instead of fluted. There is nothing in its design which we cannot readily accept as within the power of the common American builder of 1810.

Dwelling houses necessarily precede "meeting houses," for either sacred or secular purposes, but the very first provision for shelter in a new country cannot be durable. There is no part of the Atlantic coast in which timber was not readily available at the time of the first European settlements, and the very first buildings must in all cases have been log cabins. They continued the first dwellings of the pioneers as settlement went inland, and indeed they still continue to be. But as soon as the settlement became permanent and provision for shelter other than temporary, the log cabin ceased to be built. It would be interesting to know the date of the introduction into America of the saw-mill, which for a century and more has determined and dominated the vernacular building of the country. It existed in Norway before the middle of the sixteenth century, and a futile effort was made, by a Dutchman, it is worth noting, to introduce it into England shortly after the middle of the seventeenth. But it did not accompany or closely follow the advance of civilization until the present century, and indeed it is not uncommon to find houses in New England built



WASHINGTON HOUSE, GERMANTOWN, PA.

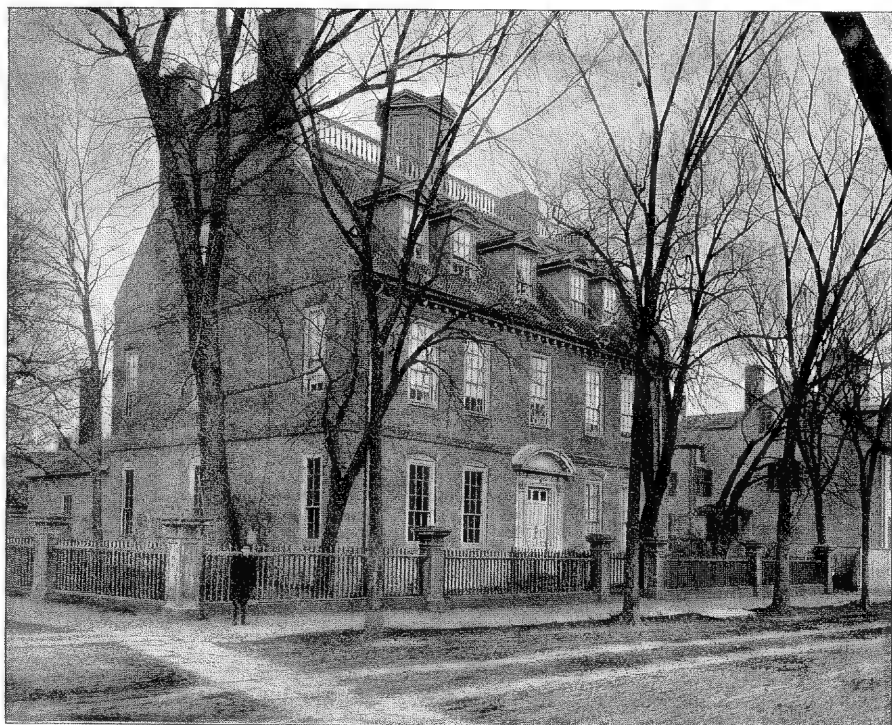
within this century of which the clapboards bear the marks of the axe. It may at any rate be laid down as a rule that the new dwellings of the second or third generation in any part of the country were no longer log cabins. To this rule there were exceptions and one of them was noted by Jefferson, who says that in Virginia, in 1781, "the poorest people build huts of logs, laid horizontally in pens, stopping the interstices with mud," and this, of course, is a description of the log cabin. But it is at least evident that the log-cabin was merely a shelter, and generally a provisional shelter. No attempt, that is to say, was made, when more costly and more leisurely building became possible, to develop the log-cabin either practically into a commodious or architecturally into a decorative dwelling. Nothing was developed here at all corresponding in skill or elaboration to the log-architecture of Switzerland or Scandinavia, and such examples of this architecture as are to be seen in this country are either importations, like the admirable Swedish school-house shown at the Centennial Exposition of 1876 and now in Central Park, or reproductions or imitations of European models, like the equally admirable building erected for the State of Idaho in the Columbian Exposition of 1893. It is perhaps unfortunate that the log-cabin should have been so soon and so completely supplanted, but it is certain that it never attained to such a development, or exercised such an influence upon succeeding buildings as entitles it to be mentioned in an account of architecture in America.

The date of the establishment of the first brick-kiln in America would be as interesting to know as the date of the establishment of the first saw-mill. It is certain that bricks were made upon both the Delaware and the Hudson early in the eighteenth century, but not likely that they were made extensively during the seventeenth. The earliest authentic instance I have been able to find of the use of native brick is in the first public buildings of Annapolis (1696-7). When Jefferson built Monticello, in 1770, the

bricks for the mansion were burnt on his own estate and under his own direction, a fact which goes to prove, as well as his own explicit statement eleven years later, that bricks were not a staple commodity in Colonial Virginia. If the date of the old church near Smithfield be accepted, it seems clear that the excellent bricks of that structure, as well as the excellent bricklayers, must have been specially imported. The earliest houses that remain to us are for the most part of rough masonry, sometimes with no brickwork, sometimes, as has already been said, with so sparing a use of brick as to indicate that it was an exotic and costly material. Of the former class is the Sip house on Bergen Heights, opposite New York, still or very lately standing and inhabited by the seventh in descent from the Sip who built it in 1666. Of the latter was the house at Gowanus which was demolished about twenty years ago, and which bore its date, 1676, in figures of iron upon its gable. The last Dutch house left in Albany, on the other hand, demolished in 1893, after an existence of two centuries, was entirely of brick, but of brick unquestionably imported. Like the Sip house on Bergen Heights, the old houses at Hackensack of the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, commemorated by Mr. Black in his interesting paper in the *ARCHITECTURAL RECORD* (Vol. III, No. 3), were rectangles of rough masonry, one story high, with a superstructure of timber, including the gables. They derive their one touch of picturesqueness, probably an unconscious touch, from the projection of the roof and of the floor-beams, with the simplest possible form of verandah, needing no supports from beneath. It is scarcely available for shade, but it forms an outside shelter and a protection against eavesdropping. The same device is a mark of the origin of such Dutch farmhouses as still remain in Flatbush and other suburbs of Brooklyn. The suburbs of New York, indeed, both in Long Island and in New Jersey, continued to be Dutch settlements throughout the eighteenth cen-



FRONT\_GABLE, HARWOOD HOUSE.



WARNER HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

ture, and constitute the most important exception to the rule that colonial building was English building. They scarcely constitute an exception to the rule that colonial architecture was English architecture.

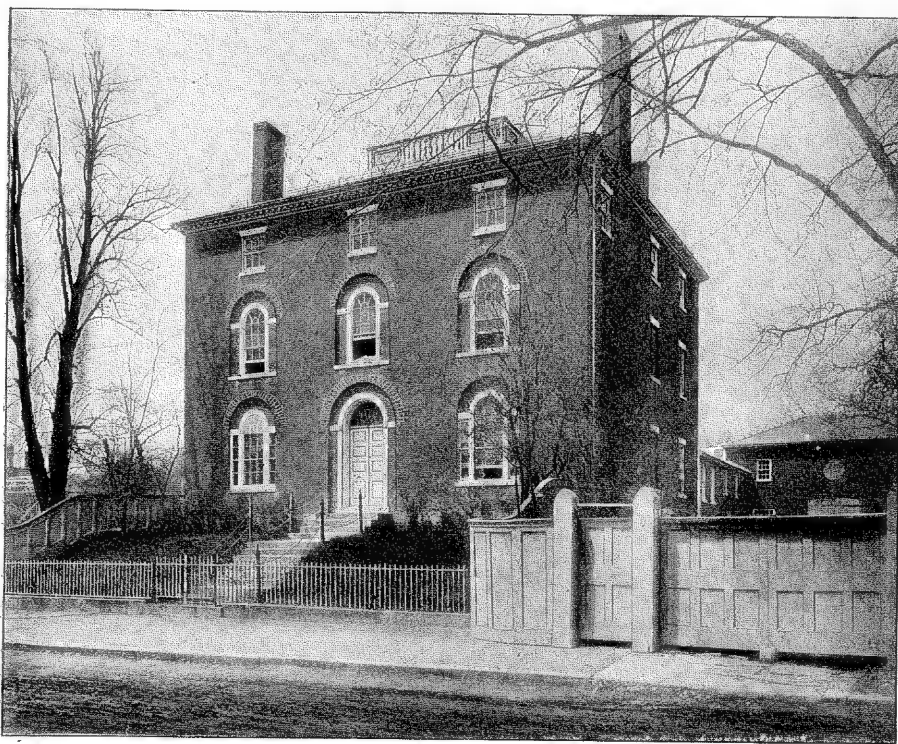
Albany, indeed, remained Dutch long after New York had become English. Morse, describing it in 1789 for his "American Geography," says that the houses were "built in the old Dutch Gothic style, with the gable end to the street, which custom the first settlers brought with them from Holland." Albany, so largely brick-built as it was long before this, must have made the impression of a durable as well as of a quaint and picturesque town upon the travelers from the South as well as from New England. I have already referred to Jefferson's deprecation of the universal use of wood in Virginia. The rosy Jones had written sixty years earlier of Virginia: "Here, as in other parts, they build with brick,

but most commonly with timber lined with ceiling and cased with feather-edged plank." Forty years earlier still Dankers and Sluyter wrote of Massachusetts: "All the houses are made of small, thin cedar shingles, nailed against frames and then filled in with brick and other stuff, and so are their churches." It is obviously unlikely, by the way, that bricks should have been imported for filling. What remains of the earliest building of New England, as well as inherent probability indicates that the "shingles" of this description are the same as the "feather-edged plank" of Jones and the "construction of scantling and plank" of Jefferson, and would now be called clap-boards. This was the vernacular building of the colonies as it is of the states. There were but four brick dwelling houses in Portsmouth, according to its annalist, before the beginning of the present century. But while Albany doubtless derived from its ma-



terial a look of more permanence than other settlements, the only badge of the "old Dutch Gothic" was in the crow-stepped gables, though not all of them were crow-stepped, and the houses were humble in dimensions and simple in construction. The Dutch house near Tarrytown, built in 1650, which Washington Irving, with the assistance of George Harvey, architect, rebuilt in 1835, and called Sunnyside, was a more commodious residence after the re-

Troy under excavation. A part, not more than half, of the Philipse manor-house, now the City Hall of Yonkers, was built during the seventeenth century by Frederick Philipse the first Lord of Philipsburg, and builder of the church at Sleepy Hollow, the remainder being added by his grandson in 1745 in unquestionable English colonial. The workmanship of the old part is substantial but rude, and the interior fittings with their clumsy mould-

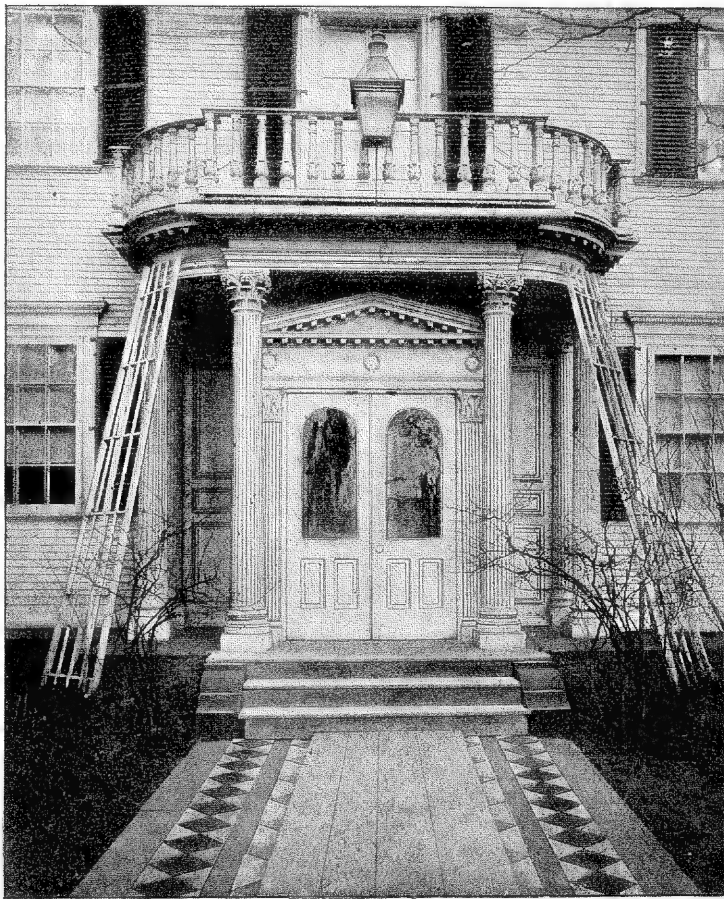


PADDOCK HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

building than at first, and yet Thackeray described it justly as "but a pretty little cabin of a place." Nay, the "great Vanderheyden palace," built in 1725, and entirely Dutch in architecture, which was the boast and wonder of Fort Orange, and the weathercock of which now adorns Sunnyside, measured but fifty feet by twenty and had two rooms on the ground floor. The early Colonial glories shrink under investigation as proud

ings suggest the handiwork of a shipwright turned joiner. But this edifice, built as it was by the richest man in New York, shows the extreme of elegance that was attainable under the Dutch dynasty.

The town-houses of the prosperous merchants of New York and Boston and Philadelphia took on during the eighteenth century a very similar aspect. Such examples as the Frankland and Hancock houses in Boston, the



GOVERNOR LANGDON'S HOUSE, PORTSMOUTH, N. H.

Walton house in New York, and the Arnold house in Philadelphia, show the type, a solid symmetrical, rectangular mansion of brick, sometimes quoined, often covered with plaster, a substantial and decorous, but scarcely artistic dwelling. Towards the close of the politically colonial period there came in, in New England and the Middle colonies, the notion referred to by Cooper in "The Pioneers," and apparently shared by him that there was a certain indelicacy in the exposure of the roof. Possibly this was an Anglomaniacal revolt against the steep roofs of the Dutch. At any rate the roof in the most pretentious houses came to be kept as low as was prac-

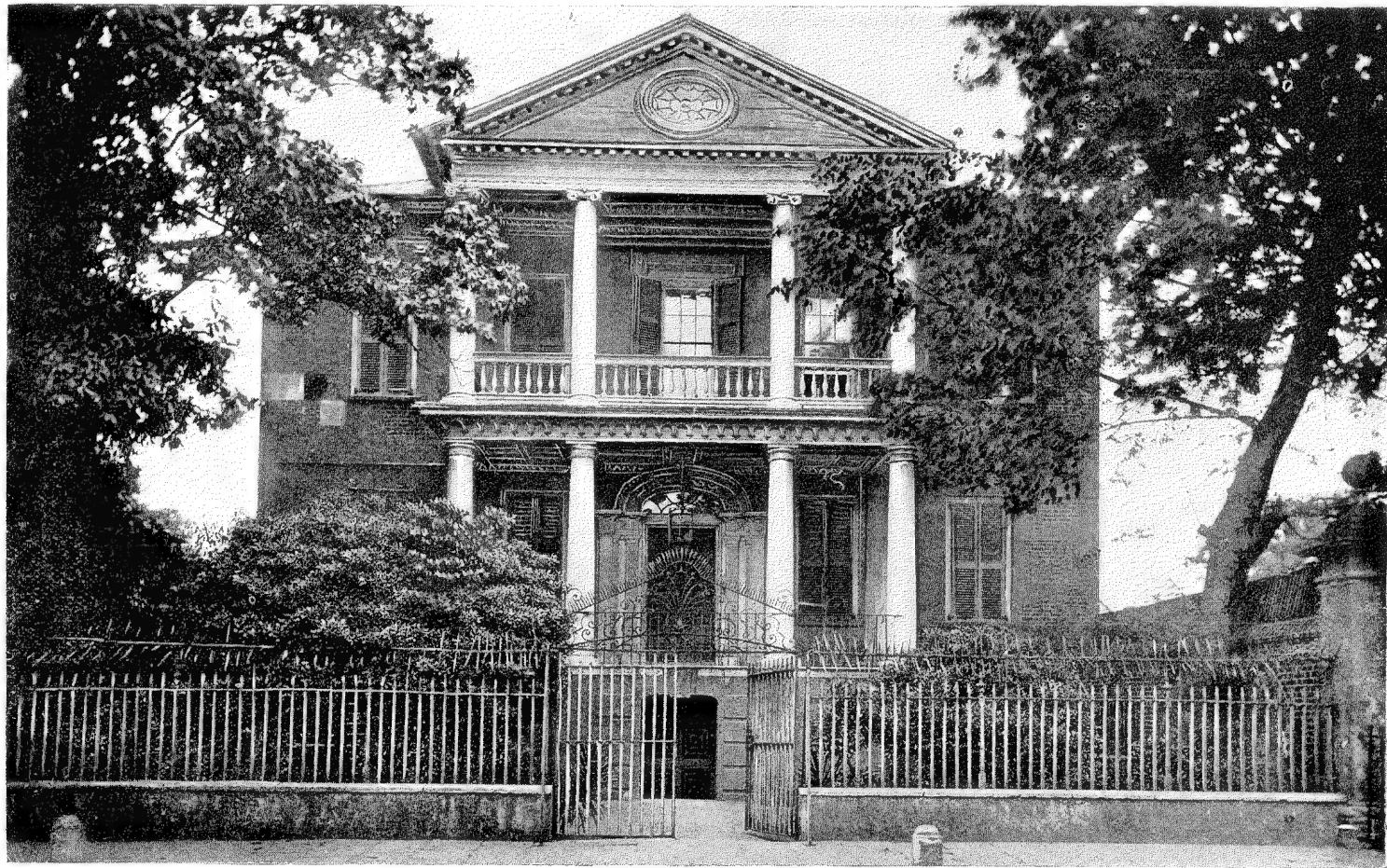
tically possible, and still further concealed by a balustrade. The Arnold mansion shows the limits of the mason's craftsmanship, as it was allowed to be exhibited in the town-houses. The carpenters and the plasterers possessed a much higher degree of skill, and to the former the exterior as well as the interior decoration of the houses was confided. In composition the only architectural quality these mansions had was the often effective proportioning of the stories to each other. The exterior decoration was confined to the entrance, which was designed by the carpenter, from the manuals of his trade which he or his predecessors had brought from the old country. He

followed his models with literal fidelity and with a high degree of mechanical skill, and it is his detail and that of the plasterer that we commonly mean when we speak in praise of colonial architecture. It was indeed very good detail of its kind, the more taking by contrast with what succeeded, when the carpenter had passed an architectural declaration of independence and trusted to his own invention. The order that embraced the entrance formed an effective central feature, whether or not it was accompanied by the decorated window that often appeared above it, as in the Scott House at Annapolis, or expanded into a portico of two orders, as in the Pringle House at Charleston. The schooled and respectful carpenter of colonial times survived in New York for at least the first third of the nineteenth century, and the stonecutters arrived at a skill sufficient to translate the prim refinement of his work into more permanent material. Thus St. John's Park and Bond street and Washington square were successively built up with mansions that owed to this detail a real attractiveness, and the well designed and executed entrances lent a grace to a much humbler dwelling, the brick high-stoop house, of two stories a basement and an attic that was the typical New York dwelling until it was supplanted by the brownstone front. This type established itself in Albany and in the older towns of central and western New York, as a much simpler type, indeed a type characterized by a simplicity that amounted to baldness, spread itself westward from Philadelphia. At the end of the first quarter of this century New Yorkers were architecturally better housed than either Philadelphians or Bostonians. If the Virginian whose opinion of New York in 1789 we have quoted, had postponed his visit for forty or even thirty years he would have been compelled to award it the prize of "elegance."

With respect to country houses, it is to be noted that New England at no time possessed a landed gentry. The rural parts of it were inhabited during the colonial period by small farmers, and the rich men were townsmen whose

fortunes had been gained in commerce. The chief of them, indeed, had been made in the fisheries, an historical fact, which survives in a phrase of Bostonian origin, the "codfish aristocracy." It was the town houses that were the costly and pretentious dwellings, and they were confined to the seaports, which were, indeed, the only towns. What is now known as the Warner house in Portsmouth, built by Captain McPhaedris, "an opulent merchant," in 1718, of bricks imported from Holland, was the wonder not only of Portsmouth, but of all New England, for its solidity and its cost, which reached what was then the prodigious sum of £6,000. It is unlikely that Boston itself contained so pretentious a dwelling. Of its most famous colonial mansions the Frankland house was built in 1735, the Hancock house in 1737, and the house of Governor Shirley in 1748. The Portsmouth house is almost exactly contemporary with the Vanderheyden palace, and the comparison is instructive. It is especially noteworthy as illustrating how the colonial dwellings of New England that are important enough to be considered an example of colonial architecture were town houses and never country seats.

What is true of New England in this respect is true of Pennsylvania. It is not quite true of New York, for New York possessed a landed gentry in the holders of the manorial grants, and these possessed "seats." The seats were not of much architectural importance. Most of those along the Hudson River, were built of wood and have perished, and of those which were built of brick few had architectural pretensions or importance, beyond what was given to them by mere size. The manor-house of the Van Rensselaers, of Rensselaers Wyck, was one of the most pretentious as well as one of the most successful of these, having form and comeliness as well as size, though the wings and the portico, that add so much to its attractiveness, were added from the designs of Richard Upjohn in 1847—the body of the house dating from 1765. It must have been almost as great a wonder in its time at Albany as the McPhaedris house in Portsmouth



THE PRINGLE MANSION, CHARLESTON, S. C. (PRE-REVOLUTIONARY.)

half a century before. The mechanical advance in the interval is in one respect noteworthy, for whereas new stone was unknown in New Hampshire in 1720, the quoins, sills and lintels of the Van Rensselaer house are of this material. The same prodigality is shown in a profusion of carved work in mahogany and pine, somewhat ruder in execution and feebler in design than such decoration could then have been found at the seaboard, but carved with spirit and with tolerable precision. The other brick country-houses that remain

Carolina" (1761) assures his readers that "the men and women who have a right to the class of gentry are more numerous here than in any other colony in North America." However that may be it is certain that there was much visiting and entertaining between the plantations, and that the plantation houses were designed and built accordingly. Unfortunately they built of wood, and their buildings have passed away. The author of the "Description for Protestant Immigrants" (1731) assures us, it is true, that "if you travel



in New York and New Jersey are much plainer and simpler, following the type of the Philipsburg manor-house at Yonkers, though the interiors are apt to be decorated with some rather elaborate wood carving, often including a room panelled in oak or pine, and some very elaborate plastering.

It was in the South, however, that family seats most abounded. The planters of rice and indigo in South Carolina, for as yet cotton was not a Southern crop, made money and spent it easily. The author of "A Short Description of the Province of South

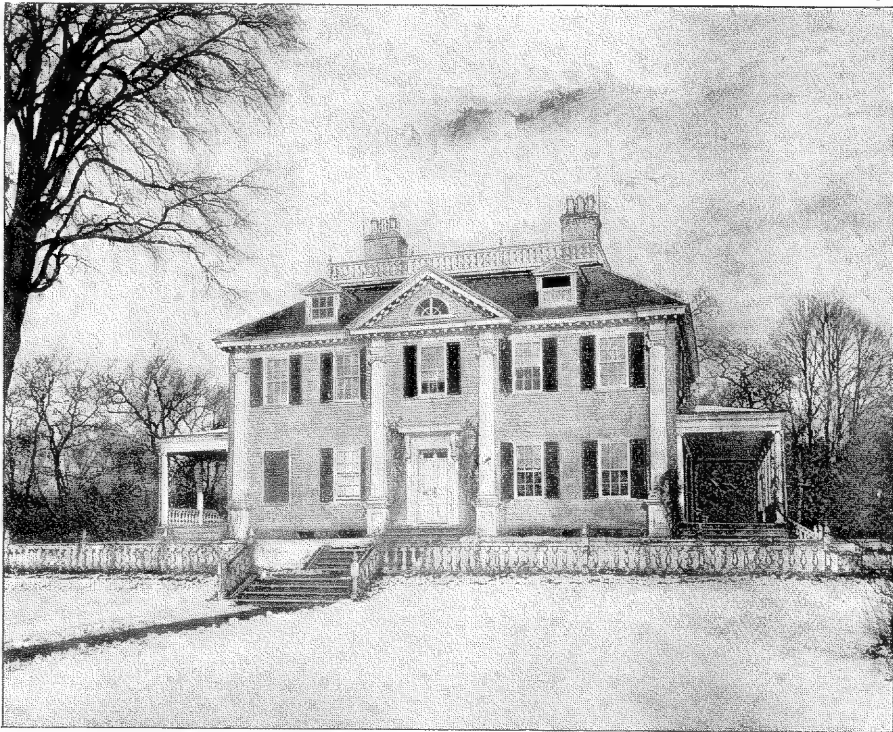
into the country you will see stately buildings, noble castles and an infinite number of all sorts of cattle." But his style discredits him as the unscrupulous author of a prospectus with designs upon the Protestant immigrants, and he lacks specification.

It was in Virginia and Maryland that the great tobacco planters became the most considerable landed gentry in the colonies, and built houses to contain themselves and their acquaintances, which are the most extensive and the most interesting of colonial country houses. "The inhabitants of Virginia,"



Burke wrote, "are a cheerful, hospitable and many of them a genteel, but somewhat vain and ostentatious people." The life of the "barons," of the Potomac and Rappahannock, the York and the James and of the Chesapeake was patriarchal, and when tobacco became a lucrative crop, they projected and built their mansions on patriarchal lines. Except for a short season at Williamsburg or Annapolis, they lived at home or at each other's homes, and

was only "founded," and the nucleus of the present mansion constructed, in 1700, Brandon about 174, The Grove 1746, Westover 1749. They were for the most part as originally designed symmetrical and rectangular masses of brickwork, the projecting porches and verandahs of such as have them being subsequent additions, required by a sunnier climate. Of exterior ornament there was little, and that little confined to the entrance. This



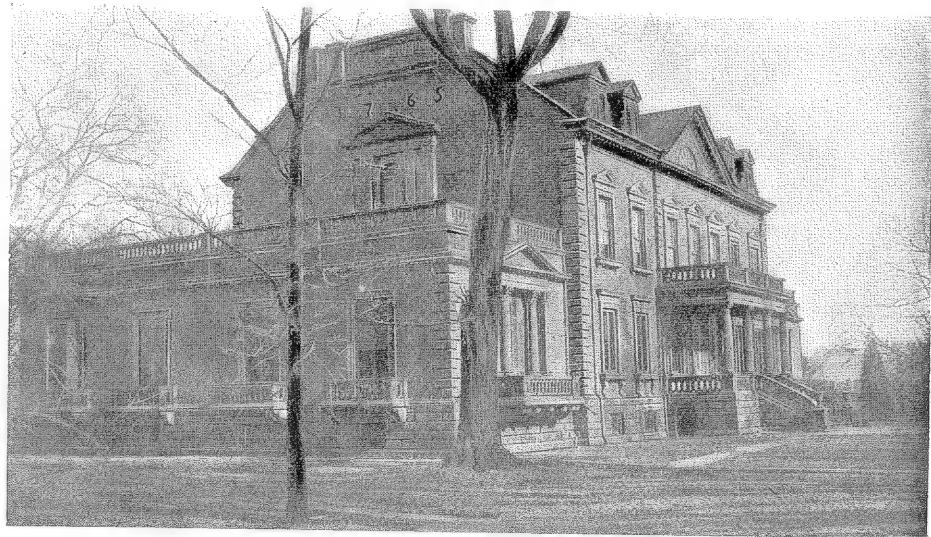
LONGFELLOW HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

they made their homes capacious accordingly. How patriarchal the life was may be inferred from the advice of one Virganiian to another, delivered within this century: "Never buy an hereditary place, for many people think they have as much right there as the owner." The great houses of the lower James are ancient as we Americans count antiquity. Shirley, the seat of the Shirley Carters, is said to have been built, though more probably it

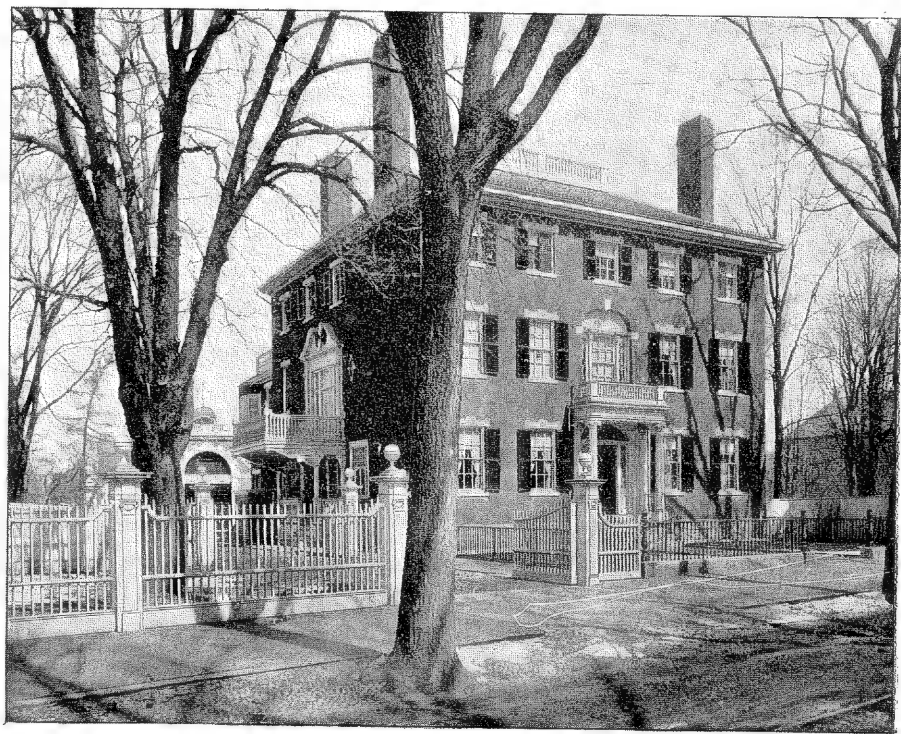
is the more remarkable because the interiors are so elaborately wrought. The explanation, doubtless, is that in "the scarcity of handicraftsmen," the mere bricklaying was all that could be done on the spot, while elaborate woodwork could be imported from England, and only put in place by the native workmen. One may pronounce with confidence that the rare specimens of hewn stone, such as the urns of Westover, were carved in England and shipped from



DINING-ROOM, CHASE HOUSE.



VAN RENSSELAER MANOR HOUSE, ALBANY, N. Y.



EMERTON HOUSE, SALEM, MASS. (REMODELED).

the stone-yard at London or Bristol to the purchaser's wharf. Evidently the ornamental iron work is from a foreign smithy. The embellishments of the mansions of Virginia and Maryland are, indeed, examples of English work of the period, and do not exhibit the slight modifications of it which are traceable at the North and differentiated the later colonial from English. In Maryland, as the aspect of Annapolis assures us, the scarcity of handicraftsmen was less than in Virginia. The mansions were really designed, outside as well as inside, and apparently by colonial mechanics. Homewood, in Baltimore, was built about 1780, but its design is evidently a reminiscence of that of Whitehall, erected in 1740-50 as the seat of Governor Sharpe. Each of these, unlike the great Virginia houses, exhibits a real and effective architectural composition, having unity, variety and subordination, with a discreet use of ornament good in itself and appropriate in scale and in form to its place. Not many examples of domestic architecture since have been more artistic, and none have expressed more distinctly the notion of a decorous and refined social life.

Doubtless this expression is the highest achievement of colonial architecture, which it reaches oftener in the minute detail of an interior than in the design of a building, or even in the composition of a front. In the expres-

sion of American life, Colonial architecture left very much to be desired, but what such a mode of building saved us from, when as yet there were no educated architects, may be seen from what followed when the trained and deferential colonial carpenter was succeeded by the emancipated and disrespectful provincial carpenter. Even the freaks of the colonial carpenters, and they sometimes indulged themselves in freaks, were gentle and subdued extravagance. The very timidity and feebleness that often accompanied the refinement of their work becomes in the retrospect an engaging and amiable weakness;

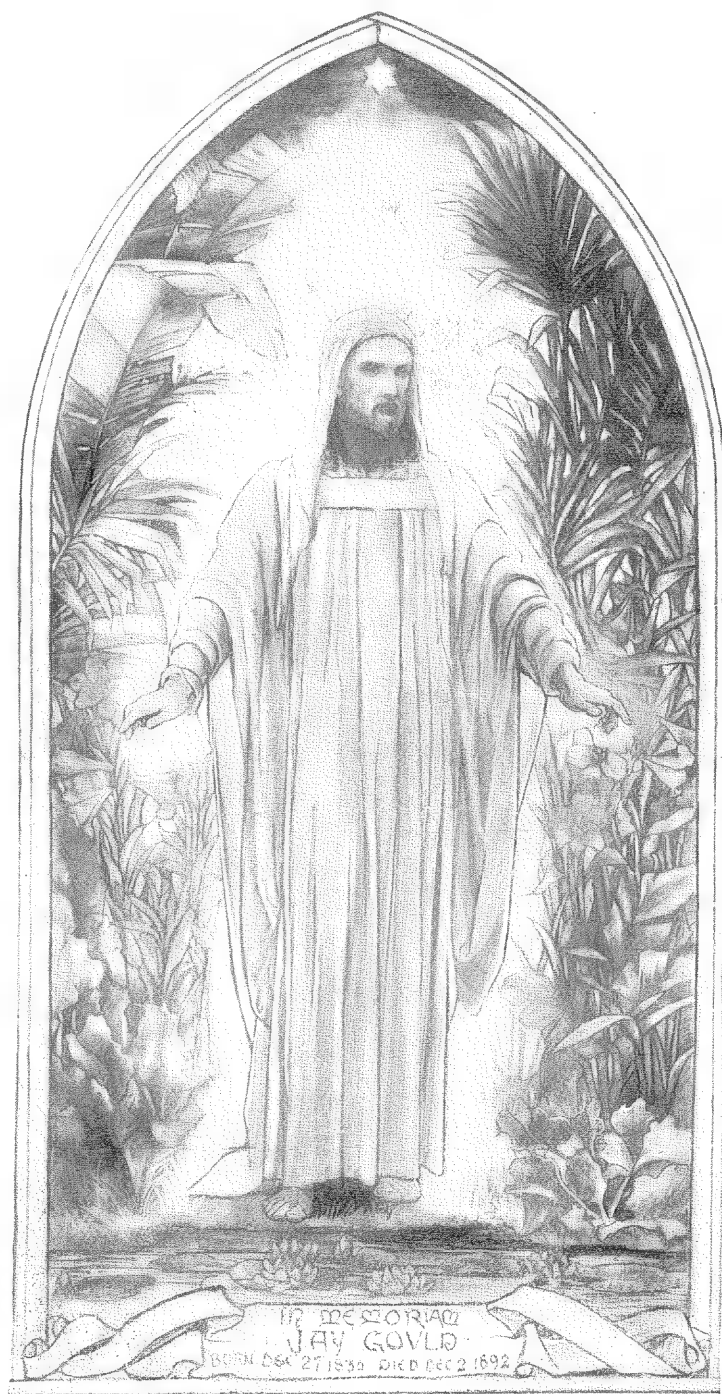
No black-souled villain ever yet  
Performed upon the flageolet.

It has been very well said of colonial building that "in the hands of a man of genius it would have been a poor tool, but to the men who had to use it, it was salvation." The examples of it which have been noticed in this survey surely suffice to convict of singular recklessness a popular historian of the United States, who ventures to say that "there did not exist in the country," in 1784, "a single piece of architecture which, when tried even by the standard of that day, can be called respectable. Not a church, not a public building, not a house has been preserved to us that is not a deformity."

Annals of Annapolis; Adams' Annals of Portsmouth; Brewster's Rambles About Portsmouth; Burke's Account of the European Settlements in America; Conway's Barons of the Potomac and Rappahannock; Frazer's Reminiscences of Charleston; Meade's Old Families and Churches of Virginia; Historical Collections; South Carolina, N. Y., 1836; Connecticut, New Haven and Hartford, 1836; New York, N. Y., 1842; Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1843; Virginia, Charleston, S. C., 1845; Historic Churches of America, Philadelphia, 1893; Jefferson's Notes on Virginia; Jefferson's Writings (9 vols., N. Y., 1853-4); Schouler's Life of Jefferson; Jones' Present State of Virginia, London, 1723; A Short Description of the Province of South Carolina, London, 1761; Descriptions of South Carolina for Protestant Immigrants, 1731; Mason's Newport Old and New; Mason's Reminiscences of Newport; Munsell's Annals of Albany; McMaster's History of the

United States; Morse's American Geography, 1789; Weise's History of Albany; Scharf's History of Maryland; Winsor's Memorial History of Boston; Philadelphia and Its Environs; Annual Address Before the American Institute of Architects, 1876 (A. J. Bloor); Annual Address Before the American Institute of Architects, 1881 (J. H. B. Latrobe); *Harper's Weekly*, April 25, 1885, February 13, 1892; *International Review*, November-December, 1874; *Century Magazine*, January, 1891, June, 1891; *Lippincott's Magazine*, July, August, 1884; *Magazine of American History*, October, 1881; *Architectural Record*, Vol. I., No. 3, Vol. III., No. 3; Year Book of Trinity Parish, N. Y., 1894; Chandler's Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, Boston, 1892 (Bates, Kimball & Guild). To the publishers of the last-named work we are indebted for permission to reproduce five illustrations in the foregoing article.

Montgomery Schuyler.



MEMORIAL WINDOW TO JAY GOULD,

(Centre window of group of three.)

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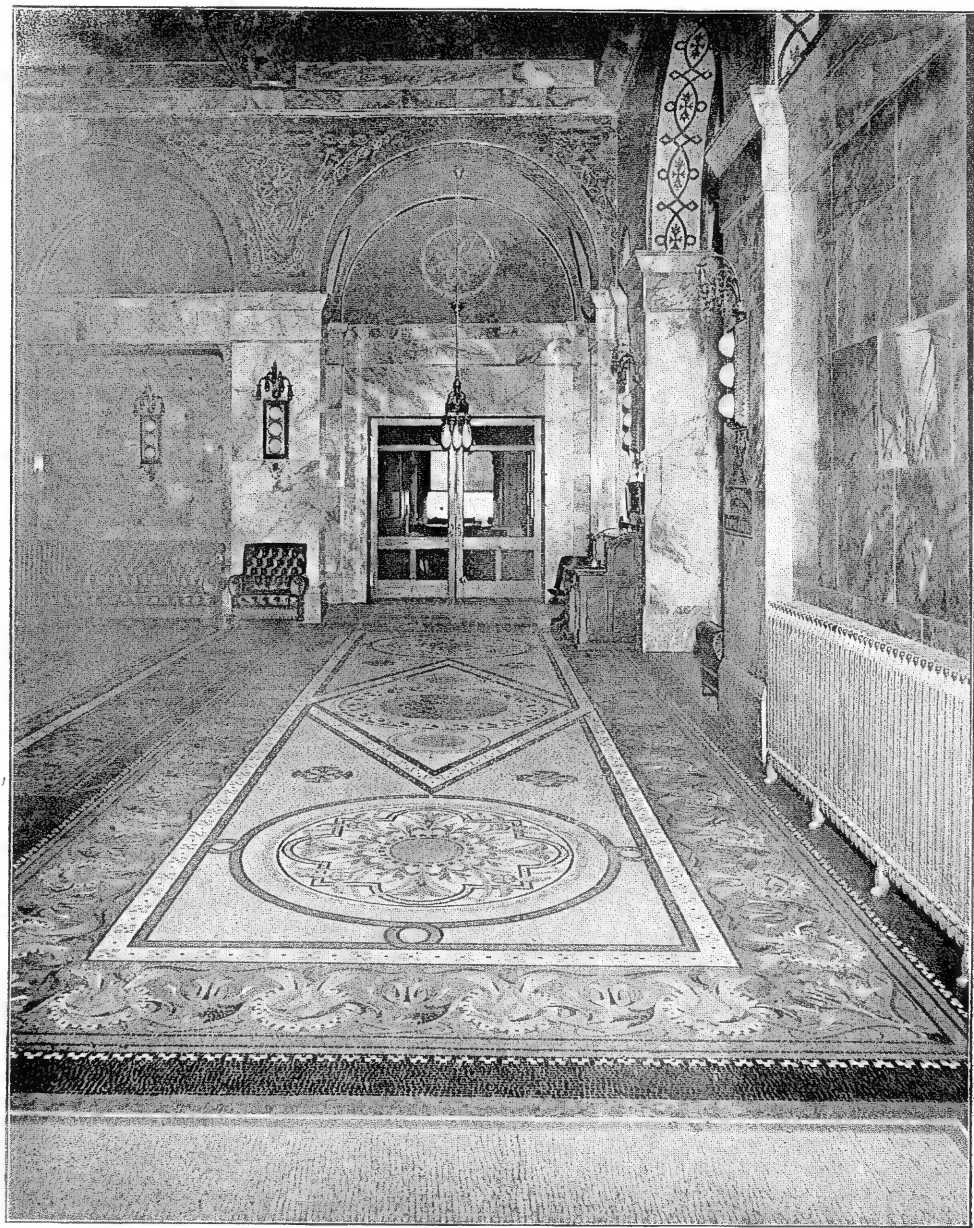
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THE NEW YORK BUILDING.

R. Maynicke, Architect.

# The Architectural Record.

VOL. IV.

JANUARY-MARCH, 1895

No. 3.

## CHRISTIAN ALTARS AND THEIR ACCESSORIES.

### Part I.



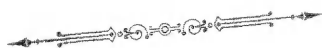
It is evident, even to the superficial observer, that we are now, in this country, at the beginning of a church-building era—a state of affairs brought about through a growing love for the beautiful, the spread of ecclesiasticism and the constantly increasing wealth of the various religious organizations. Old-time prejudices are rapidly disappearing, the meeting-house idea is becoming obsolete, the edifices of the past are no longer good enough or churchly enough; hence there is a general call from all denominations, both in town and country, for new and better or more artistic buildings. In some cases this movement is inspired by doctrine and devotion, and in others it rises from mere emulation and fashion. American architects, with few exceptions, have not as yet shown themselves equal to the occasion; the opportunity to do good work has often been lost, not from their inability, but because they were not in touch with either the ecclesiastical or ecclesiological requirements. The young architect has the time to study the subject in all its many branches, to make himself familiar with the rules, both canonical and traditional, which govern the building, ornamentation and fur-

nishing of churches; but not so his older brother, already overwhelmed with a large and growing practice. Nevertheless, even he, if he aspires to do a good piece of ecclesiastical work, must absolutely take the time in which to acquire that necessary knowledge. No matter how great a genius he may be, he cannot afford to ignore the wonderful architectural monuments of the past, so full of artistic beauty and originality. Therefore this article on one branch of the subject, viz.: the history, construction and decoration of altars, has been written in the hope that it may prove useful—to one as an introduction to further study, to the other as a safe epitome of the essential facts.

It is not an original treatise, but only a careful and conscientious compilation from a large number of notes, which the author has gathered in the course of years from many writers and monuments as the exigencies of an active ecclesiological career called for the information therein contained. There will be no attempt to solve any archæological will-o'-the-wisp, to foster any peculiar religious views, or to advocate any particular ecclesiastical architectural theory, but simply to place before the reader those facts which will be of practical use to him should he be called upon to build an altar.

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